Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/childlifeinprose00whit

NY PUBLIC LIBRARY THE BRANCH LIBRARIES
3 3333 18278 8717

J 818 Whittier
DCH STACKS

READING ROOM

CHILD LIFE IN PROSE.

EDITED BY

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

Illustrated.

BOSTON:
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY.
The Riverside Press, Cambridge.

New York Public Library
—*—
MELROSE BRANCH
910 MORRIS AVENUE
—*—
CIRCUL RTMENT

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1873,
BY JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO.,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

TWENTY SECOND IMPRESSION

10506

j81
W3

"We behold a child. Who is it? Whose is it? What is it? It is in the centre of fantastic light, and only a dim revealed form appears. It is God's own child, as all children are. The blood of Adam and Eve, through how many soever channels diverging, runs in its veins; and the spirit of the Eternal, which blows everywhere, has animated it. It opens its eyes upon us, stretches out its hands to us as all children do. Can you love it? It may be heir of a throne, — does it interest you? Or of a milking-stool, — do not despise it. It is a miracle of the All-working; it is endowed by the All-gifted. Smile upon it, it will a smile give back again; prick it, it will cry. Where does it belong? In what zone or climate? It may have been born on the Thames or the Amazon, the Hoang-ho or the Mississippi. It is God's child still, and its mother's. It is curiously and wonderfully made. The inspiration of the Almighty hath given it understanding. It will look after God by how many soever names he may be called; it will seek to know; it will long to be loved; it will sin and be miserable; if it has none to care for it, it will die."

Judd's *Margaret.*

PREFACE.

THE unexpectedly favorable reception of the poetical compilation entitled "Child Life" has induced its publishers to call for the preparation of a companion volume of prose stories and sketches, gathered, like the former, from the literature of widely separated nationalities and periods. Illness, preoccupation, and the inertia of unelastic years would have deterred me from the undertaking, but for the assistance which I have had from the lady whose services are acknowledged in the preface to "Child Life." I beg my young readers, therefore, to understand that I claim little credit for my share in the work, since whatever merit it may have is largely due to her taste and judgment. It may be well to admit, in the outset, that the book is as much for child-lovers, who have not outgrown their child-heartedness in becoming mere men and women, as for children themselves; that it is as much *about* childhood, as *for* it. If not the wisest, it appears to me that the happiest people in the world are those who still retain something of the child's creative faculty of imagination, which makes atmosphere and color, sun and shadow, and boundless horizons, out of what seems to prosaic wisdom most inadequate material, — a tuft of grass, a mossy rock, the rain-pools of a passing shower, a glimpse of sky and cloud, a waft of west-wind, a bird's flutter and song. For the child is always something of a poet; if he cannot analyze, like Wordsworth and Tennyson, the emotions which expand his being, even as the fulness of life bursts open the petals of a flower, he finds with them all Nature plastic to his eye and hand. The soul of genius and the heart of childhood are one.

Not irreverently has Jean Paul said, "I love God and little children. Ye stand nearest to Him, ye little ones." From the Infinite Heart a sacred Presence has gone forth and filled the earth with the sweetness of immortal infancy. Not once in history alone, but every day and always, Christ sets the little child in the midst of us as the truest reminder of himself, teaching us the secret of happiness, and leading us into the kingdom by the way of humility and tenderness.

In truth, all the sympathies of our nature combine to render childhood an object of powerful interest. Its beauty, innocence, dependence, and possibilities of destiny, strongly appeal to our sensibilities, not only in real life, but in fiction and poetry. How sweetly, amidst the questionable personages who give small occasion of respect for manhood or womanhood as they waltz and wander through the story of Wilhelm Meister, rises the child-figure of Mignon! How we turn from the light dames and faithless cavaliers of Boccaccio to contemplate his exquisite picture of the little Florentine, Beatrice, that fair girl of eight summers, so "pretty in her childish ways, so ladylike and pleasing, with her delicate features and fair proportions, of such dignity and charm of manner as to be looked upon as a little angel!" And of all the creations of her illustrious lover's genius, whether in the world of mortals or in the uninviting splendors of his Paradise, what is there so beautiful as the glimpse we have of him in his *Vita Nuova*, a boy of nine years, amidst the bloom and greenness of the Spring Festival of Florence, checking his noisy merry-making in rapt admiration of the little Beatrice, who seemed to him "not the daughter of mortal man, but of God"? Who does not thank John Brown, of Edinburgh, for the story of Marjorie Fleming, the fascinating child-woman, laughing beneath the plaid of Walter Scott, and gathering at her feet the wit and genius of Scotland? The labored essays from which St. Pierre hoped for immortality, his philosophies, sentimentalisms, and theories of tides, have all quietly passed into the limbo of unreadable things; while a simple story of childhood keeps his memory green as the tropic island in which the scene is laid, and his lovely creations remain to walk hand in hand beneath the palms of Mauritius so long as children shall be born and the hearts of youths and maidens cleave to each other. If the after story of the poet-king and warrior of Israel sometimes saddens and pains us, who does not love to think of him as a shepherd boy, "ruddy and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon," singing to his flocks on the hill-slopes of Bethlehem?

In the compilation of this volume the chief embarrassment has arisen from the very richness and abundance of materials. As a matter of course, the limitations prescribed by its publishers have compelled the omission of much that, in point of merit, may compare favorably with the selections. Dickens's great family of ideal children, Little Nell, Tiny Tim, and the Marchioness; Harriet Beecher Stowe's Eva and Topsy; George MacDonald's quaint and charming child-dreamers; and last, but not least, John Brown's Pet Marjorie, — are only a few of the pictures for which no place has been found. The book, of necessity, but imperfectly reflects that child-world which fortunately is always about us, more beautiful in its living realities than it has ever been painted.

It has been my wish to make a readable book of such literary merit as not to offend the cultivated taste of parents, while it amused their children. I may confess in this connection, that, while aiming at simple and not unhealthful amusement, I have been glad to find the light tissue of these selections occasionally shot through with threads of pious or moral suggestion. At the same time, I have not felt it right to sadden my child-readers with gloomy narratives and painful reflections upon the life before them. The lessons taught are those of Love, rather than Fear. "I can bear," said Richter, "to look upon a melancholy man, but I cannot look upon a melancholy child. Fancy a butterfly crawling like a caterpillar with his four wings pulled off!"

It is possible that the language and thought of some portions of the book may be considered beyond the comprehension of the class for which it is intended. Admitting that there may be truth in the objection, I believe with Coventry Patmore, in his preface to a child's book, that the charm of such a volume is increased, rather than lessened, by the surmised existence of an unknown amount of power, meaning, and beauty. I well remember how, at a very early age, the solemn organ-roll of Gray's Elegy and the lyric sweep and pathos of Cowper's Lament for the Royal George moved and fascinated me with a sense of mystery and power felt, rather than understood. "A spirit passed before my face, but the form thereof was not discerned." Freighted with unguessed meanings, these poems spake to me, in an unknown tongue indeed, but, like the wind in the pines or the waves on the beach, awakening faint echoes and responses, and vaguely prophesying of wonders yet to be revealed. John Woolman tells us, in his autobiography, that, when a small child, he read from that sacred prose poem, the Book of Revelation, which has so perplexed critics and commentators, these words, "He showed me a river of the waters of life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb," and that his mind was drawn thereby to seek after that wonderful purity, and that the place where he sat and the sweetness of that child-yearning remained still fresh in his memory in after life. The spirit of that mystical anthem which Milton speaks of as "a seven-fold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies," hidden so often from the wise and prudent students of the letter, was felt, if not comprehended, by the simple heart of the child.

It will be seen that a considerable portion of the volume is devoted to autobiographical sketches of infancy and childhood. It seemed to me that it might be interesting to know how the dim gray dawn and golden sunrise of life looked to poets and philosophers ; and to review with them the memories upon which the reflected light of their genius has fallen.

I leave the little collection, not without some misgivings, to the critical, but I hope not unkindly, regard of its young readers. They will, I am sure, believe me when I tell them that if my own paternal claims, like those of Elia, are limited to "dream children," I have catered for the real ones with cordial sympathy and tender solicitude for their well-being and happiness.

J. G. W.

Amesbury, 1873.

CONTENTS.

STORIES OF CHILD LIFE.

		Page
Little Annie's Ramble	*Nathaniel Hawthorne*	13
Why the Cow turned her Head away	*Abby Morton Diaz*	22
The Baby of the Regiment	*T. W. Higginson*	27
Prudy Parlin	*"Sophie May"*	38
Mrs. Walker's Betsey	*Helen B. Bostwick*	43
The Rainbow-Pilgrimage	*Grace Greenwood*	54
On White Island	*Celia Thaxter*	58
The Cruise of the Dolphin	*T. B. Aldrich*	64
A Young Mahometan	*Mary Lamb*	76
The Little Persian	*Juvenile Miscellany*	81
The Boys' Heaven	*L. Maria Child*	83
Bessie's Garden	*Caroline S. Whitmarsh*	87
How the Crickets brought Good Fortune	*P. J. Stahl*	97
Paul and Virginia	*Bernardin de Saint Pierre*	101
Oeyvind and Marit	*Björnsterne Björnsen*	109
Boots at the Holly-Tree Inn	*Charles Dickens*	119
Amrie and the Geese	*Berthold Auerbach*	131
The Robins	*John Woolman*	135
The Fish I did n't catch	*John G. Whittier*	137
Little Kate Wordsworth	*Thomas De Quincey*	142
How Margery wondered	*Lucy Larcom*	145
The Nettle-Gatherer	*From the Swedish*	149
Little Arthur's Prayer	*Thomas Hughes*	156
Faith and her Mother	*Elizabeth Stuart Phelps*	161
The Open Door	*John de Liefde*	165
The Prince's Visit	*Horace Scudder*	167

FANCIES OF CHILD LIFE.

The Hen that hatched Ducks . . . . *Harriet Beecher Stowe* 175
Blunder . . . . . . *Louise E. Chollet* . 185
Star-Dollars . . . . *Grimm's Household Tales* 192
The Immortal Fountain . . . . . *L. Maria Child* . . 193
The Bird's-Nest in the Moon . . . *New England Magazine* . 201
Dream-Children: A Revery . . . *Charles Lamb* . . 204
The Ugly Duckling . . . . . *Hans Christian Andersen* 209
The Poet and his Little Daughter . *Mary Howitt* . . 220
The Red Flower . . . . . . *Madame De Gasparin* . 226
The Story without an End . . . *German of Carove* . 229

MEMORIES OF CHILD LIFE.

Hans Christian Andersen 253
Madame Michelet 262
Jean Paul Richter 271
Charles Lamb 276
Hugh Miller 281
Walter Scott 286
Frederick Douglass 290
Charles Dickens 297

STORIES OF CHILD LIFE.

PROPERTY OF THE
CITY OF NEW YORK.

STORIES OF CHILD LIFE.

LITTLE ANNIE'S RAMBLE.

DING-DONG! Ding-dong! Ding-dong!

The town-crier has rung his bell at a distant corner, and little Annie stands on her father's door-steps, trying to hear what the man with the loud voice is talking about. Let me listen too. O, he is telling the people that an elephant, and a lion, and a royal tiger, and a horse with horns, and other strange beasts from foreign countries, have come to town, and will receive all visitors who choose to wait upon them! Perhaps little Annie would like to go. Yes; and I can see that the pretty child is weary of this wide and pleasant street, with the green trees flinging their shade across the quiet sunshine, and the pavements and the sidewalks all as clean as if the housemaid had just swept them with her broom. She feels that impulse to go strolling away — that longing after the mystery of the great world — which many children feel, and which I felt in my childhood. Little Annie shall take a ramble with me. See! I do but hold out my hand, and, like some bright bird in the sunny air, with her blue silk frock fluttering upwards from her white pantalets, she comes bounding on tiptoe across the street.

Smooth back your brown curls, Annie; and let me tie on your bonnet, and we will set forth! What a strange couple to go on their rambles together! One walks in black attire, with a measured step, and a heavy brow, and his thoughtful eyes bent down, while the gay little girl trips lightly along, as if she were forced to keep hold of my hand, lest her feet should dance away from the earth. Yet there is sympathy between us. If I pride myself on anything, it is because I have a smile that children love; and, on the other hand, there are few grown ladies that could entice me from the side of little Annie; for I delight to let my mind go hand in hand with the mind of a sinless child. So come, Annie; but if I moralize as we go, do not listen to me; only look about you and be merry!

Now we turn the corner. Here are hacks with two horses, and stage-coaches with four, thundering to meet each other, and trucks and carts moving at a slower pace, being heavily laden with barrels from the wharves; and here are rattling gigs, which perhaps will be smashed to pieces before our eyes. Hitherward, also, comes a man trundling a wheelbarrow along the pavement. Is not little Annie afraid of such a tumult? No: she does not even shrink closer to my side, but passes on with fearless confidence, — a happy child amidst a great throng of grown people, who pay the same reverence to her infancy that they would to extreme old age. Nobody jostles her; all turn aside to make way for little Annie; and, what is most singular, she appears conscious of her claim to such respect. Now her eyes brighten with pleasure! A street musician has seated himself on the steps of yonder church, and pours forth his strains to the busy town, a melody that has gone astray among the tramp of footsteps, the buzz of voices, and the war of passing wheels. Who heeds the poor organ-grinder? None but myself and little Annie, whose feet begin to move in unison with the lively tune, as if she were loath that music should be wasted without a dance. But where would Annie find a partner? Some have the gout in their toes, or the rheumatism in their joints; some are stiff with age; some feeble with disease; some are so lean that their bones would rattle, and others of such ponderous size that their agility would crack the flagstones ; but many, many have leaden feet, because their hearts are far heavier than lead. It is a sad thought that I have chanced upon. What a company of dancers should we be ? For I, too, am a gentleman of sober footsteps, and therefore, little Annie, let us walk sedately on.

It is a question with me, whether this giddy child or my sage self have most pleasure in looking at the shop windows. We love the silks of sunny hue, that glow within the darkened premises of the spruce dry-goods' men ; we are pleasantly dazzled by the burnished silver and the chased gold, the rings of wedlock and the costly love-ornaments, glistening at the window of the jeweller ; but Annie, more than I, seeks for a glimpse of her passing figure in the dusty looking-glasses at the hardware stores. All that is bright and gay attracts us both.

Here is a shop to which the recollections of my boyhood, as well as present partialities, give a peculiar magic. How delightful to let the fancy revel on the dainties of a confectioner; those pies, with such white and flaky paste, their contents being a mystery whether rich mince, with whole plums intermixed, or piquant apple, delicately rose-flavored; those cakes, heart-shaped or round, piled in a lofty pyramid; those sweet little circlets, sweetly named kisses; those dark, majestic masses, fit to be bridal loaves at the wedding of an heiress, mountains in size, their summits deeply snow-covered with sugar! Then the mighty treasures of sugar-plums, white and crimson and yellow, in large glass vases; and candy of all varieties; and those little cockles, or whatever they are called, much prized by children for their sweetness, and more for the mottoes which they enclose, by love-sick maids and bachelors! O, my mouth waters, little Annie, and so doth yours; but we will not be tempted, except to an imaginary feast; so let us hasten onward, devouring the vision of a plum-cake.

Here are pleasures, as some people would say, of a more exalted kind, in the window of a bookseller. Is Annie a literary lady? Yes; she is deeply read in Peter Parley's tomes, and has an increasing love for fairy-tales, though seldom met with nowadays, and she will subscribe, next year, to the Juvenile Miscellany. But, truth to tell, she is apt to turn away from the printed page, and keep gazing at the pretty pictures, such as the gay-colored ones which make this shop window the continual loitering-place of children. What would Annie think if, in the book which I mean to send her on New Year's day, she should find her sweet little self, bound up in silk or morocco with gilt edges, there to remain till she become a woman grown, with children of her own to read about their mother's childhood. That would be very queer.

Little Annie is weary of pictures, and pulls me onward by the hand, till suddenly we pause at the most wondrous shop in all the town. O my stars! Is this a toyshop, or is it fairyland? For here are gilded chariots, in which the king and queen of the fairies might ride side by side, while their courtiers, on these small horses, should gallop in triumphal procession before and behind the royal pair. Here, too, are dishes of china-ware, fit to be the dining-set of those same princely personages when they make a regal banquet in the stateliest hall of their palace, full five feet high, and behold their nobles feasting adown the long perspective of the table. Betwixt the king and queen should sit my little Annie, the prettiest fairy of them all. Here stands a turbaned Turk, threatening us with his sabre, like an ugly heathen as he is. And next a Chinese mandarin, who nods his head at Annie and myself. Here we may review a whole army of horse and foot, in red and blue uniforms, with drums, fifes, trumpets, and all kinds of noiseless music; they have halted on the shelf of this window, after their weary march from Liliput. But what cares Annie for soldiers? No conquering queen is she, neither a Semiramis nor a Catharine; her whole heart is set upon that doll, who gazes at us with such a fashionable stare. This is the little girl's true plaything. Though made of wood, a doll is a visionary and ethereal personage, endowed by childish fancy with a peculiar life; the mimic lady is a heroine of romance, an actor and a sufferer in a thousand shadowy scenes, the chief inhabitant of that wild world with which children ape the real one. Little Annie does not understand what I am saying, but looks wishfully at the proud lady in the window. We will invite her home with us as we return. Meantime, good by, Dame Doll! A toy yourself, you look forth from your window upon many ladies that are also toys, though they walk and speak, and upon a crowd in pursuit of toys, though they wear grave visages. O, with your never-closing eyes, had you but an intellect to moralize on all that flits before them, what a wise doll would you be! Come, little Annie, we shall find toys enough, go where we may.

Now we elbow our way among the throng again. It is curious, in the most crowded part of a town, to meet with living creatures that had their birthplace in some far solitude, but have acquired a second nature in the wilderness of men. Look up, Annie, at that canary-bird, hanging out of the window in his cage. Poor little fellow! His golden feathers are all tarnished in this smoky sunshine; he would have glistened twice as brightly among the summer islands; but still he has become a citizen in all his tastes and habits, and would not sing half so well without the uproar that drowns his music. What a pity that he does not know how miserable he is! There is a parrot, too, calling out, "Pretty Poll! Pretty Poll!" as we pass by. Foolish bird, to be talking about her prettiness to strangers, especially as she is not a pretty Poll, though gaudily dressed in green and yellow. If she had said "Pretty Annie," there would have been some sense in it. See that gray squirrel, at the door of the fruit-shop, whirling round and round so merrily within his wire wheel! Being condemned to the treadmill, he makes it an amusement. Admirable philosophy!

Here comes a big, rough dog, a countryman's dog in search of his master; smelling at everybody's heels, and touching little Annie's hand with his cold nose, but hurrying away, though she would fain have patted him. Success to your search, Fidelity! And there sits a great yellow cat upon a window-sill, a very corpulent and comfortable cat, gazing at this transitory world, with owl's eyes, and making pithy comments, doubtless, or what appear such, to the silly beast. O sage puss, make room for me beside you, and we will be a pair of philosophers!

Here we see something to remind us of the town-crier, and his ding-dong bell! Look! look at that great cloth spread out in the air, pictured all over with wild beasts, as if they had met together to choose a king, according to their custom in the days of Æsop. But they are choosing neither a king nor a president, else we should hear a most horrible snarling! They have come from the deep woods, and the wild mountains, and the desert sands, and the polar snows, only to do homage to my little Annie. As we enter among them, the great elephant makes us a bow, in the best style of elephantine courtesy, bending lowly down his mountain bulk, with trunk abased and leg thrust out behind. Annie returns the salute, much to the gratification of the elephant, who is certainly the best-bred monster in the caravan. The lion and the lioness are busy with two beef-bones. The royal tiger, the beautiful, the untamable, keeps pacing his narrow cage with a haughty step, unmindful of the spectators, or recalling the fierce deeds of his former life, when he was wont to leap forth upon such inferior animals, from the jungles of Bengal.

Here we see the very same wolf, — do not go near him, Annie! — the self-same wolf that devoured little Red Riding-Hood and her grandmother. In the next cage, a hyena from Egypt, who has doubtless howled around the pyramids, and a black bear from our own forests, are fellow-prisoners and most excellent friends. Are there any two living creatures who have so few sympathies that they cannot possibly be friends? Here sits a great white bear, whom common observers would call a very stupid beast, though I perceive him to be only absorbed in contemplation; he is thinking of his voyages on an iceberg, and of his comfortable home in the vicinity of the north pole, and of the little cubs whom he left rolling in the eternal snows. In fact, he is a bear of sentiment. But O, those unsentimental monkeys! the ugly, grinning, aping, chattering, ill-natured, mischievous, and queer little brutes. Annie does not love the monkeys. Their ugliness shocks her pure, instinctive delicacy of taste, and makes her mind unquiet, because it bears a wild and dark resemblance to humanity. But here is a little pony, just big enough for Annie to ride, and round and round he gallops in a circle, keeping time with his trampling hoofs to a band of music. And here, — with a laced coat and a cocked hat, and a riding-whip in his hand, — here comes a little gentleman, small enough to be king of the fairies, and ugly enough to be king of the gnomes, and takes a flying leap into the saddle. Merrily, merrily plays the music, and merrily gallops the pony, and merrily rides the little old gentleman. Come, Annie, into the street again; perchance we may see monkeys on horseback there!

Mercy on us, what a noisy world we quiet people live in! Did

Annie ever read the Cries of London City? With what lusty lungs doth yonder man proclaim that his wheelbarrow is full of lobsters! Here comes another mounted on a cart, and blowing a hoarse and dreadful blast from a tin horn, as much as to say "Fresh fish!" And hark! a voice on high, like that of a muezzin from the summit of a mosque, announcing that some chimney-sweeper has emerged from smoke and soot, and darksome caverns, into the upper air. What cares the world for that? But, welladay! we hear a shrill voice of affliction, the scream of a little child, rising louder with every repetition of that smart, sharp, slapping sound, produced by an open hand on tender flesh. Annie sympathizes, though without experience of such direful woe. Lo! the town-crier again, with some new secret for the public ear. Will he tell us of an auction, or of a lost pocket-book, or a show of beautiful wax figures, or of some monstrous beast more horrible than any in the caravan? I guess the latter. See how he uplifts the bell in his right hand, and shakes it slowly at first, then with a hurried motion, till the clapper seems to strike both sides at once, and the sounds are scattered forth in quick succession, far and near.

Ding-dong! Ding-dong! Ding-dong!

Now he raises his clear, loud voice, above all the din of the town; it drowns the buzzing talk of many tongues, and draws each man's mind from his own business; it rolls up and down the echoing street, and ascends to the hushed chamber of the sick, and penetrates downward to the cellar-kitchen, where the hot cook turns from the fire to listen. Who, of all that address the public ear, whether in church or court-house or hall of state, has such an attentive audience as the town-crier? What saith the people's orator?

"Strayed from her home, a LITTLE GIRL, of five years old, in a blue silk frock and white pantalets, with brown curling hair and hazel eyes. Whoever will bring her to her afflicted mother —"

Stop, stop, town-crier! The lost is found. O my pretty Annie, we forgot to tell your mother of our ramble, and she is in despair, and has sent the town-crier to bellow up and down the streets, affrighting old and young, for the loss of a little girl who has not once let go my hand! Well, let us hasten homeward; and as we go, forget not to thank Heaven, my Annie, that, after wandering a little way into the world, you may return at the first summons, with an untainted and unwearied heart, and be a happy child again. But I have gone too far astray for the town-crier to call me back.

Sweet has been the charm of childhood on my spirit, throughout my ramble with little Annie! Say not that it has been a waste of precious moments, an idle matter, a babble of childish talk, and a revery of childish imaginations, about topics unworthy of a grown man's notice. Has it been merely this? Not so; not so. They are not truly wise who would affirm it. As the pure breath of children revives the life of aged men, so is our moral nature revived by their free and simple thoughts, their native feeling, their airy mirth, for little cause or none, their grief, soon roused and soon allayed. Their influence on us is at least reciprocal with ours on them. When our infancy is almost forgotten, and our boyhood long departed, though it seems but as yesterday; when life settles darkly down upon us, and we doubt whether to call ourselves young any more, then it is good to steal away from the society of bearded men, and even of gentler woman, and spend an hour or two with children. After drinking from those fountains of still fresh existence, we shall return into the crowd, as I do now, to struggle onward and do our part in life, perhaps as fervently as ever, but, for a time, with a kinder and purer heart, and a spirit more lightly wise. All this by thy sweet magic, dear little Annie!

Nathaniel Hawthorne.

WHY THE COW TURNED HER HEAD AWAY.

"MOOLLY COW, your barn is warm, the wintry winds cannot reach you, nor frost nor snow. Why are your eyes so sad? Take this wisp of hay. See, I am holding it up? It is very good. Now you turn your head away. Why do you look so sorrowful, Moolly Cow, and turn your head away?"

"Little girl, I am thinking of the time when that dry wisp of hay was living grass. When those brown, withered flowers were blooming clovertops, buttercups, and daisies, and the bees and the butterflies came about them. The air was warm then, and gentle winds blew. Every morning I went forth to spend the day in sunny pastures. I am thinking now of those early summer mornings, — how the birds sang, and the sun shone, and the grass glittered with dew! and the boy that opened the gates, how merrily he whistled! I stepped quickly along, sniffing the fresh morning air, snatching at times a hasty mouthful by the way; it was really very pleasant! And when the bars fell, how joyfully I leaped over! I knew where the grass grew green and tender, and hastened to eat it while the dew was on.

"As the sun rose higher I sought the shade, and at noonday would lie under the trees chewing, chewing, chewing, with half-shut eyes, and the drowsy insects humming around me; or perhaps I would stand motionless upon the river's bank, where one might catch a breath of air, or wade deep in to cool myself in the stream. And when noontime was passed and the heat grew less, I went back to the grass and flowers.

"And thus the long summer day sped on, — sped pleasantly on, for I was never lonely. No lack of company in those sunny pasture-lands! The grasshoppers and crickets made a great stir, bees buzzed, butterflies were coming and going, and birds singing always. I knew where the ground-sparrows built, and all about the little field-mice. They were very friendly to me, for often, while nibbling the grass, I would whisper, 'Keep dark, little mice! Don't fly, sparrows! The boys are coming!"

"No lack of company, — O no! When that withered hay was living grass, yellow with buttercups, white with daisies, pink with clover, it was the home of myriads of little insects. — very, very little insects. O, but they made things lively, crawling, hopping, skipping among the roots, and up and down the stalks, so happy, so full of life, — never still! And now not one left alive! They are gone. That pleasant summer-time is gone. O, these long, dismal winter nights! All day I stand in my lonely stall, listening, not to the song of birds, or hum of bees, or chirp of grasshoppers, or the pleasant rustling of leaves, but to the noise of howling winds, hail, sleet, and driving snow!

"Little girl, I pray you don't hold up to me that wisp of hay. In just that same way they held before my eyes, one pleasant morning, a bunch of sweet clover, to entice me from my pretty calf!

"Poor thing! It was the only one I had! So gay and sprightly! Such a playful, frisky, happy young thing! It was a joy to see her caper and toss her heels about, without a thought of care or sorrow. It was good to feel her nestling close at my side, to look into her bright, innocent eyes, to rest my head lovingly upon her neck!

"And already I was looking forward to the time when she would become steady and thoughtful like myself; was counting greatly upon her company of nights in the dark barn, or in roaming the fields through the long summer days. For the butterflies and bees, and all the bits of insects, though well enough in their way, and most excellent company, were, after all, not akin to me, and there is nothing like living with one's own blood relations.

"But I lost my pretty little one! The sweet clover enticed me away. When I came back she was gone! I saw through the bars the rope wound about her. I saw the cart. I saw the cruel men lift her in. She made a mournful noise. I cried out, and thrust my head over the rail, calling, in language she well understood, 'Come back! O, come back!'

"She looked up with her round, sorrowful eyes and wished to come, but the rope held her fast! The man cracked his whip, the cart rolled away; I never saw her more!

"No, little girl, I cannot take your wisp of hay. It reminds me of the silliest hour of my life, — of a day when I surely made myself a fool. And on that day, too, I was offered by a little girl a bunch of grass and flowers.

"It was a still summer's noon. Not a breath of air was stirring. I had waded deep into the stream, which was then calm and smooth. Looking down I saw my own image in the water. And I perceived that my neck was thick and clumsy, that my hair was brick-color, and my head of an ugly shape, with two horns sticking out much like the prongs of a pitchfork. 'Truly, Mrs. Cow,' I said, 'you are by no means handsome!'

"Just then a horse went trotting along the bank. His hair was glossy black, he had a flowing mane, and a tail which grew thick and long. His proud neck was arched, his head lifted high. He trotted lightly over the ground, bending in his hoofs daintily at every footfall. Said I to myself, 'Although not well-looking, — which is a great pity, — it is quite possible that I can step beautifully, like the horse; who knows?' And I resolved to plod on no longer in sober cow-fashion, but to trot off nimbly and briskly and lightly.

"I hastily waded ashore, climbed the bank, held my head high, stretched out my neck, and did my best to trot like the horse, bending in my hoofs as well as was possible at every step, hoping that all would admire me.

"Some children gathering flowers near by burst into shouts of laughter, crying out, 'Look! Look!' 'Mary!' 'Tom!' 'What ails the cow?' 'She acts like a horse!' 'She is putting on airs!' 'Clumsy thing!' 'Her tail is like a pump-handle!' 'O, I guess she 's a mad cow!' Then they ran, and I sank down under a tree with tears in my eyes.

"But one little girl stayed behind the rest, and, seeing that I was quiet, she came softly up, step by step, holding out a bunch of grass and clover. I kept still as a mouse. She stroked me with her soft hand, and said, —

"'O good Moolly Cow, I love you dearly; for my mother has told me very nice things about you. Of course. you are not handsome. O no, O no! But then you are good-natured, and so we all love you. Every day you give us sweet milk, and never keep any for yourself. The boys strike you sometimes, and throw stones, and set the dogs on you; but you give them your milk just the same. And you are never contrary like the horse, stopping when you ought to go, and going when you ought to stop. Nobody has to whisper in your ears, to make you gentle, as they do to horses; you are gentle of your own accord, dear Moolly Cow. If you do walk up to children sometimes, you won't hook; it 's only playing, and I will stroke you and love you dearly. And if you 'd like to know, I 'll tell you that there 's a wonderful lady who puts you into her lovely pictures, away over the water.'

"Her words gave me great comfort, and may she never lack for milk to crumb her bread in! But O, take away your wisp of hay, little girl: for you bring to mind the summer days which are gone, and my pretty bossy, that was stolen away, and also — my own folly."

Abby Morton Diaz.

THE BABY OF THE REGIMENT.

WE were in our winter camp on Port Royal Island. It was a lovely November morning, soft and spring-like; the mocking-birds were singing, and the cotton-fields still white with fleecy pods. Morning drill was over, the men were cleaning their guns and singing very happily; the officers were in their tents, reading still more happily their letters just arrived from home. Suddenly I heard a knock at my tent-door, and the latch clicked. It was the only latch in camp, and I was very proud of it, and the officers always clicked it as loudly as possible, in order to gratify my feelings. The door opened, and the Quartermaster thrust in the most beaming face I ever saw.

"Colonel," said he, "there are great news for the regiment. My wife and baby are coming by the next steamer!"

"Baby!" said I, in amazement. "Q. M., you are beside yourself." (We always called the Quartermaster Q. M. for shortness.) "There was a pass sent to your wife, but nothing was ever said about a baby. Baby indeed!"

"But the baby was included in the pass," replied the triumphant father-of-a-family. "You don't suppose my wife would come down here without her baby! Besides, the pass itself permits her to bring necessary baggage; and is not a baby six months old necessary baggage?"

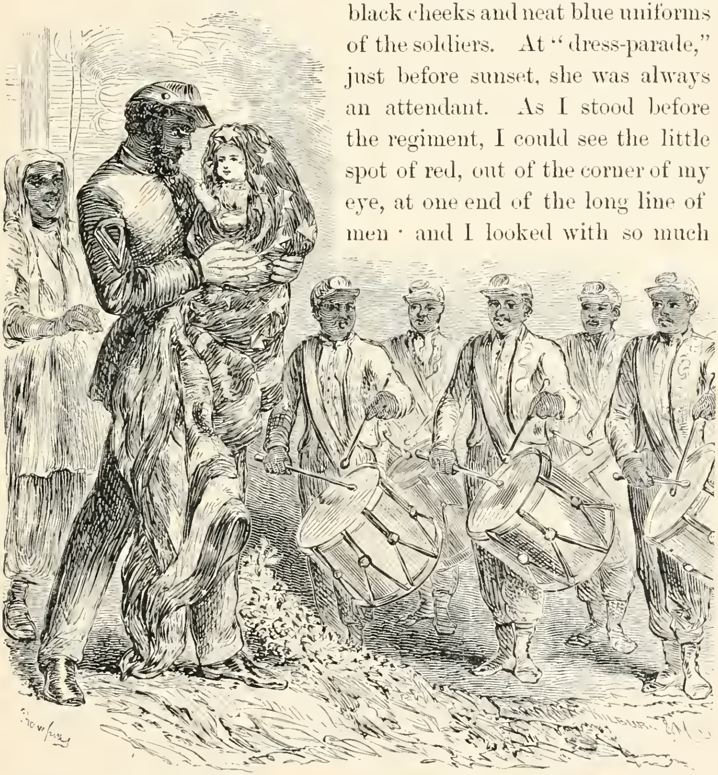
"But, my dear fellow," said I, rather anxiously, "how can you make the little thing comfortable in a tent, amidst these rigors of a South Carolina winter, when it is uncomfortably hot for drill at noon, and ice forms by your bedside at night?"

"Trust me for that," said the delighted papa, and went off whistling. I could hear him telling the same news to three others, at least, before he got to his own tent.

That day the preparations began, and soon his abode was a wonder of comfort. There were posts and rafters, and a raised floor, and a great chimney, and a door with hinges, — every luxury except a latch, and that he could not have, for mine was the last that could be purchased. One of the regimental carpenters was employed to make a cradle, and another to make a bedstead high enough for the cradle to go under. Then there must be a bit of red carpet beside the bedstead; and thus the progress of splendor went on. The wife of one of the colored sergeants was engaged to act as nursery-maid. She was a very respectable young woman, the only objection to her being that she smoked a pipe. But we thought that perhaps Baby might not dislike tobacco; and if she did, she would have excellent opportunities to break the pipe in pieces.

In due time the steamer arrived, and Baby and her mother were among the passengers. The little recruit was soon settled in her new cradle, and slept in it as if she had never known any other. The sergeant's wife soon had her on exhibition through the neighborhood, and from that time forward she was quite a queen among us. She had sweet blue eyes and pretty brown hair, with round, dimpled cheeks, and that perfect dignity which is so beautiful in a baby. She hardly ever cried, and was not at all timid. She would go to anybody, and yet did not encourage any romping from any but the most intimate friends. She always wore a warm, long-sleeved scarlet cloak with a hood, and in this costume was carried, or "toted," as the soldiers said, all about the camp. At "guard-mounting" in the morning, when the men who are to go on guard duty for the day are drawn up to be inspected, Baby was always there, to help to inspect them. She did not say much, but she eyed them very closely, and seemed fully to appreciate their bright buttons. Then the Officer-of-the-Day, who appears at guard-mounting with his sword and sash, and comes afterwards to the Colonel's tent for orders, would come and speak to Baby on his way, and receive her orders first. When the time came for drill she was usually present to watch the troops; and when the drum beat for dinner she liked to see the long row of men in each company march up to the cook-house, in single file, each with tin cup and plate.

During the day, in pleasant weather, she might be seen in her nurse's arms, about the company streets, the centre of an admiring circle, her scarlet costume looking very pretty amidst the shining black cheeks and neat blue uniforms of the soldiers. At "dress-parade," just before sunset, she was always an attendant. As I stood before the regiment, I could see the little spot of red, out of the corner of my eye, at one end of the long line of men · and I looked with so much interest for her small person, that, instead of saying at the proper time, "Attention, Battalion! Shoulder arms!" it is a wonder that I did not say, "Shoulder babies!"



Our little lady was very impartial, and distributed her kind looks to everybody. She had not the slightest prejudice against color, and did not care in the least whether her particular friends were black or white. Her especial favorites, I think, were the drummer-boys, who were not my favorites by any means, for they were a roguish set of scamps, and gave more trouble than all the grown men in the regiment. I think Annie liked them because they were small, and made a noise, and had red caps like her hood, and red facings on their jackets, and also because they occasionally stood on their heads for her amusement. After dress-parade the whole drum-corps would march to the great flag-staff, and wait till just sunset-time, when they would beat "the retreat," and then the flag would be hauled down, — a great festival for Annie. Sometimes the Sergeant-Major would wrap her in the great folds of the flag, after it was taken down, and she would peep out very prettily from amidst the stars and stripes, like a new-born Goddess of Liberty.

About once a month, some inspecting officer was sent to the camp by the General in command, to see to the condition of everything in the regiment, from bayonets to buttons. It was usually a long and tiresome process, and, when everything else was done, I used to tell the officer that I had one thing more for him to inspect, which was peculiar to our regiment. Then I would send for Baby to be exhibited; and I never saw an inspecting officer, old or young, who did not look pleased at the sudden appearance of the little, fresh, smiling creature, — a flower in the midst of war. And Annie in her turn would look at them, with the true baby dignity in her face, — that deep, earnest look which babies often have, and which people think so wonderful when Raphael paints it, although they might often see just the same expression in the faces of their own darlings at home.

Meanwhile Annie seemed to like the camp style of housekeeping very much. Her father's tent was double, and he used the front apartment for his office, and the inner room for parlor and bedroom, while the nurse had a separate tent and wash-room behind all. I remember that, the first time I went there in the evening, it was to borrow some writing-paper; and while Baby's mother was hunting for it in the front tent, I heard a great cooing and murmuring in the inner room. I asked if Annie was still awake, and her mother told me to go in and see. Pushing aside the canvas door, I entered. No sign of anybody was to be seen; but a variety of soft little happy noises seemed to come from some unseen corner. Mrs. C. came quietly in, pulled away the counterpane of her own bed, and drew out the rough cradle, where lay the little damsel, perfectly happy, and wider awake than anything but a baby possibly can be. She looked as if the seclusion of a dozen family bedsteads would not be enough to discourage her spirits, and I saw that camp life was likely to suit her very well.

A tent can be kept very warm, for it is merely a house with a thinner wall than usual; and I do not think that Baby felt the cold much more than if she had been at home that winter. The great trouble is, that a tent-chimney, not being built very high, is apt to smoke when the wind is in a certain direction; and when that happens it is hardly possible to stay inside. So we used to build the chimneys of some tents on the east side, and those of others on the west, and thus some of the tents were always comfortable. I have seen Baby's mother running, in a hard rain, with little Red-Riding-Hood in her arms, to take refuge with the Adjutant's wife, when every other abode was full of smoke; and I must admit that there were one or two windy days that season when nobody could really keep warm, and Annie had to remain ignominiously in her cradle, with as many clothes on as possible, for almost the whole time.

The Quartermaster's tent was very attractive to us in the evening. I remember that once, on passing near it after nightfall, I heard our Major's fine voice singing Methodist hymns within, and Mrs. C.'s sweet tones chiming in. So I peeped through the outer door. The fire was burning very pleasantly in the inner tent, and the scrap of new red carpet made the floor look quite magnificent. The Major sat on a box, our surgeon on a stool; "Q. M." and his wife, and the Adjutant's wife, and one of the captains, were all sitting on the bed, singing as well as they knew how; and the baby was under the bed. Baby had retired for the night, — was overshadowed, suppressed, sat upon; the singing went on, and she had wandered away into her own land of dreams, nearer to heaven, perhaps, than any pitch their voices could attain. I went in and joined the party. Presently the music stopped, and another officer was sent for, to sing some particular song. At this pause the invisible innocent waked a little, and began to cluck and coo.

"It 's the kitten," exclaimed somebody.

"It 's my baby!" exclaimed Mrs. C. triumphantly, in that tone of unfailing personal pride which belongs to young mothers.

The people all got up from the bed for a moment, while Annie was pulled from beneath, wide awake, and placid as usual; and she sat in one lap or another during the rest of the concert, sometimes winking at the candle, but usually listening to the songs, with a calm and critical expression, as if she could make as much noise as any of them, whenever she saw fit to try. Not a sound did she make, however, except one little soft sneeze, which led to an immediate flood-tide of red shawl, covering every part of her but the forehead. But I soon hinted that the concert had better be ended, because I knew from observation that the small damsel had carefully watched a regimental inspection and a brigade drill on that day, and that an interval of repose was certainly necessary.

Annie did not long remain the only baby in camp. One day, on going out to the stables to look at a horse, I heard a sound of baby-talk, addressed by some man to a child near by, and, looking round the corner of a tent, I saw that one of the hostlers had something black and round, lying on the sloping side of a tent, with which he was playing very eagerly. It proved to be his baby, — a plump, shiny thing, younger than Annie; and I never saw a merrier picture than the happy father frolicking with his child, while the mother stood quietly by. This was Baby Number Two, and she stayed in camp several weeks, the two innocents meeting each other every day in the placid indifference that belonged to their years; both were happy little healthy things, and it never seemed to cross their minds that there was any difference in their complexions. As I said before, Annie was not troubled by any prejudice in regard to color, nor do I suppose that the other little maiden was.

Annie enjoyed the tent-life very much; but when we were sent out on picket soon after, she enjoyed it still more. Our head-quarters were at a deserted plantation house, with one large parlor, a dining-room and a few bedrooms. Baby's father and mother had a room up stairs, with a stove whose pipe went straight out at the window. This was quite comfortable, though half the windows were broken, and there was no glass and no glazier to mend them. The windows of the large parlor were in much the same condition, though we had an immense fireplace, where we had a bright fire whenever it was cold, and always in the evening. The walls of this room were very dirty, and it took our ladies several days to cover all the unsightly places with wreaths and hangings of evergreen. In this performance Baby took an active part. Her duties consisted in sitting in a great nest of evergreen, pulling and fingering the fragrant leaves, and occasionally giving a little cry of glee when she had accomplished some piece of decided mischief.

There was less entertainment to be found in the camp itself at this time; but the household at head-quarters was larger than Baby had been accustomed to. We had a great deal of company, moreover, and she had quite a gay life of it. She usually made her appearance in the large parlor soon after breakfast; and to dance her for a few moments in our arms was one of the first daily duties of each one. Then the morning reports began to arrive from the different outposts, — a mounted officer or courier coming in from each place, dismounting at the door, and clattering in with jingling arms and spurs, each a new excitement for Annie. She usually got some attention from any officer who came, receiving with her wonted dignity any daring caress. When the messengers had ceased to be interesting, there were always the horses to look at, held or tethered under the trees beside the sunny piazza. After the various couriers had been received, other messengers would be despatched to the town, seven miles away, and Baby had all the excitement of their mounting and departure. Her father was often one of the riders, and would sometimes seize Annie for a good-by kiss, place her on the saddle before him, gallop her round the house once or twice, and then give her back to her nurse's arms again. She was perfectly fearless, and such boisterous attentions never frightened her, nor did they ever interfere with her sweet, infantine self-possession.

After the riding-parties had gone, there was the piazza still for entertainment, with a sentinel pacing up and down before it; but Annie did not enjoy the sentinel, though his breastplate and buttons shone like gold, so much as the hammock which always hung swinging between the pillars. It was a pretty hammock, with great open meshes; and she delighted to lie in it, and have the netting closed above her, so that she could only be seen through the apertures. I can see her now, the fresh little rosy thing, in her blue and scarlet wrappings, with one round and dimpled arm thrust forth through the netting, and the other grasping an armful of blushing roses and fragrant magnolias. She looked like those pretty French bas-reliefs of Cupids imprisoned in baskets, and peeping through. That hammock was a very useful appendage; it was a couch for us, a cradle for Baby, a nest for the kittens; and we had, moreover, a little hen, which tried to roost there every night.

When the mornings were colder, and the stove up stairs smoked the wrong way, Baby was brought down in a very incomplete state of toilet, and finished her dressing by the great fire. We found her bare shoulders very becoming, and she was very much interested in her own little pink toes. After a very slow dressing, she had a still slower breakfast out of a tin cup of warm milk, of which she generally spilt a good deal, as she had much to do in watching everybody who came into the room, and seeing that there was no mischief done. Then she would be placed on the floor, on our only piece of carpet, and the kittens would be brought in for her to play with.

We had, at different times, a variety of pets, of whom Annie did not take much notice. Sometimes we had young partridges, caught by the drummer-boys in trap-cages. The children called them "Bob and Chloe," because the first notes of the male and female sound like those names. One day I brought home an opossum, with her blind bare little young clinging to the droll pouch where their mothers keep them. Sometimes we had pretty green lizards, their color darkening or deepening, like that of chameleons, in light or shade. But the only pets that took Baby's fancy were the kittens. They perfectly delighted her, from the first moment she saw them; they were the only things younger than herself that she had ever beheld, and the only things softer than themselves that her small hands had grasped. It was astonishing to see how much the kittens would endure from her. They could scarcely be touched by any one else without mewing; but when Annie seized one by the head and the other by the tail, and rubbed them violently together, they did not make a sound. I suppose that a baby's grasp is really soft, even if it seems ferocious, and so it gives less pain than one would think. At any rate, the little animals had the best of it very soon; for they entirely outstripped Annie in learning to walk, and they could soon scramble away beyond her reach, while she sat in a sort of dumb despair, unable to comprehend why anything so much smaller than herself should be so much nimbler. Meanwhile, the kittens would sit up and look at her with the most provoking indifference, just out of arm's length, until some of us would take pity on the young lady, and toss her furry playthings back to her again. "Little baby," she learned to call them; and these were the very first words she spoke.

Baby had evidently a natural turn for war, further cultivated by an intimate knowledge of drills and parades. The nearer she came to actual conflict the better she seemed to like it, peaceful as her own little ways might be. Twice, at least, while she was with us on picket, we had alarms from the Rebel troops, who would bring down cannon to the opposite side of the Ferry, about two miles beyond us, and throw shot and shell over upon our side. Then the officer at the Ferry would think that there was to be an attack made, and couriers would be sent, riding to and fro, and the men would all be called to arms in a hurry, and the ladies at headquarters would all put on their best bonnets, and come down stairs, and the ambulance would be made ready to carry them to a place of safety before the expected fight. On such occasions Baby was in all her glory. She shouted with delight at being suddenly uncribbed and thrust into her little scarlet cloak, and brought down stairs, at an utterly unusual and improper hour, to a piazza with lights and people and horses and general excitement. She crowed and gurgled and made gestures with her little fists, and screamed out what seemed to be her advice on the military situation, as freely as if she had been a newspaper editor. Except that it was rather difficult to understand her precise directions, I do not know but the whole Rebel force might have been captured through her plans. And, at any rate, I should much rather obey her orders than those of some generals whom I have known; for she at least meant no harm, and would lead one into no mischief.

However, at last the danger, such as it was, would be all over, and the ladies would be induced to go peacefully to bed again; and Annie would retreat with them to her ignoble cradle, very much disappointed, and looking vainly back at the more martial scene below. The next morning she would seem to have forgotten all about it, and would spill her bread and milk by the fire as if nothing had happened.

I suppose we hardly knew, at the time, how large a part of the sunshine of our daily lives was contributed by dear little Annie. Yet, when I now look back on that pleasant Southern home, she seems as essential a part of it as the mocking-birds or the magnolias, and I cannot convince myself that, in returning to it, I should not find her there. But Annie went back, with the spring, to her Northern birthplace, and then passed away from this earth before her little feet had fairly learned to tread its paths; and when I meet her next it must be in some world where there is triumph without armies, and where innocence is trained in scenes of peace. I know, however, that her little life, short as it seemed, was a blessing to us all, giving a perpetual image of serenity and sweetness, recalling the lovely atmosphere of far-off homes, and holding us by unsuspected ties to whatsoever things were pure.

T. W. Higginson.

PRUDY PARLIN.

PRUDY PARLIN and her sister Susy, three years older, lived in Portland, in the State of Maine.

Susy was more than six years old, and Prudy was between three and four. Susy could sew quite well for a girl of her age, and had a stint every day. Prudy always thought it very fine to do just as Susy did, so she teased her mother to let *her* have some patchwork too, and Mrs. Parlin gave her a few calico pieces, just to keep her little fingers out of mischief.

But when the squares were basted together, she broke needles, pricked her fingers, and made a great fuss; sometimes crying, and wishing there were no such thing as patchwork.

One morning she sat in her rocking-chair, doing what she thought was a *stint*. She kept running to her mother with every stitch, saying, "Will that do?" Her mother was very busy, and said, "My little daughter must not come to me." So Prudy sat down near the door, and began to sew with all her might; but soon her little baby sister came along looking so cunning that Prudy dropped her needle and went to hugging her.

"O little sister," cried she, "I would n't have a horse come and eat you up for anything in the world!"

After this, of course, her mother had to get her another needle, and then thread it for her. She went to sewing again till she pricked her finger, and the sight of the wee drop of blood made her cry.

"O dear! I wish somebody would pity me!" But her mother was so busy frying doughnuts that she could not stop to talk much; and the next thing she saw of Prudy she was at the farther end of the room, while her patchwork lay on the spice-box.

"Prudy, Prudy, what are you up to now?"

"Up to the table," said Prudy. "O mother, I 'm so sorry, but I 've broke a crack in the pitcher!"

"What will mamma do with you? You have n't finished your stint: what made you get out of your chair?"

"O, I thought grandma might want me to get her *speckles.* I thought I would go and find Zip too. See, mamma, he 's so tickled to see me he shakes all over — every bit of him!"

"Where 's your patchwork?"

"I don't know. You 've got a double name, have n't you, doggie? It 's Zip Coon; but it is n't a *very* double name, — is it, mother?"

When Mrs. Parlin had finished her doughnuts, she said, "Pussy, you can't keep still two minutes. Now, if you want to sew this patchwork for grandma's quilt, I 'll tell you what I shall do. There 's an empty hogshead in the back kitchen, and I 'll lift you into that, and you can't climb out. I 'll lift you out when your stint is done."

"O, what a funny little house!" said Prudy, when she was inside; and as she spoke her voice startled her, — it was so loud and hollow. "I 'll talk some more," thought she, "it makes such a queer noise. 'Old Mrs. Hogshead, I thought I 'd come and see you, and bring my work. I like your house, ma'am, only I should think you 'd want some windows. I s'pose you know who I am, Mrs. Hogshead? My name is Prudy. My mother did n't put me in here because I was a naughty girl, for I have n't done nothing — nor nothing — nor nothing. Do you want to hear some singing?

'O, come, come away,
From labor now reposin';
Let *busy Caro, wife of Barrow,*
Come, come away!'"

"Prudy, what 's the matter?" said mamma, from the next room.

"Did n't you hear somebody singing?" said Prudy; "well, 't was me."

"O, I was afraid you were crying, my dear!"

"Then I 'll stop," said the child. "Now, Mrs. Hogshead, you won't hear me singing any more, — it *mortifies* my mother very much."

So Prudy made her fingers fly, and soon said, "Now, mamma, I 've got it done, and I 'm ready to be *took out!*"

Just then her father came into the house. "Prudy 's in the hogshead," said Mrs. Parlin. "Won't you please lift her out, father? I 've got baby in my arms."

Mr. Parlin peeped into the hogshead. "How in this world did you ever get in here, child?" said he. "I think I 'll have to take you out with a pair of tongs."

Prudy laughed.

"Give me your hands," said papa. "Up she comes! Now, come sit on my knee," added he, when they had gone into the parlor, "and tell me how you climbed into that hogshead."

"Mother dropped me in, and I 'm going to stay there till I make a bedquilt, — only I 'm coming out to eat, you know."

Mr. Parlin laughed; but just then the dinner-bell rang, and when they went to the table, Prudy was soon so busy with her roasted chicken and custard pie that she forgot all about the patchwork.

Prudy soon tired of sewing, and her mother said, laughing, "If Grandma Read has to wait for somebody's little fingers before she gets a bedquilt, poor grandma will sleep very cold indeed."

The calico pieces went into the rag-bag, and that was the last of Prudy's patchwork.

One day the children wanted to go and play in the "new house," which was not quite done. Mrs. Parlin was almost afraid little Prudy might get hurt, for there were a great many loose boards and tools lying about, and the carpenters, who were at work on the house, had all gone away to see some soldiers. But at last she said they might go if Susy would be very careful of her little sister.

Susy meant to watch Prudy with great care, but after a while she got to thinking of something else. The little one wanted to play "catch," but Susy saw a great deal more sport in building block houses.

"Now I know ever so much more than you do," said Susy. "I used to wash dishes and scour knives when I was four years old, and that was the time I learned you to walk, Prudy; so you ought to play with me, and be goody."

"Then I will; but them blocks is too big, Susy. If I had *a axe* I 'd chop 'em: I 'll go get *a axe*." Little Prudy trotted off, and Susy never looked up from her play, and did not notice that she was gone a long while.

By and by Mrs. Parlin thought she would go and see what the children were doing; so she put on her bonnet and went over to the "new house." Susy was still busy with her blocks, but she looked up at the sound of her mother's footsteps.

"Where is Prudy?" said Mrs. Parlin, glancing around.

"I 'm 'most up to heaven," cried a little voice overhead.

They looked, and what did they see? Prudy herself standing on the highest beam of the house! She had climbed three ladders to get there. Her mother had heard her say the day before that "she did n't want to shut up her eyes and die, and be all deaded up. — she meant to have her hands and face clean, and go up to heaven on a ladder."

"O," thought the poor mother, "she is surely on the way to heaven, for she can never get down alive. My darling, my darling!"

Poor Susy's first thought was to call out to Prudy, but her mother gave her one warning glance, and that was enough: Susy neither spoke nor stirred.

Mrs. Parlin stood looking up at her, — stood as white and still as if she had been frozen! Her trembling lips moved a little, but it was in prayer; she knew that only God could save the precious one.

While she was begging him to tell her what to do, a sudden thought flashed across her mind. She dared not speak, lest the sound of her voice should startle the child; but she had a bunch of keys in her pocket, and she jingled the keys, holding them up as high as possible, that Prudy might see what they were.

When the little one heard the jingling, she looked down and smiled. "You goin' to let me have some cake and 'serves in the china-closet, — me and Susy?"

Mrs. Parlin smiled, — such a smile! It was a great deal sadder than tears, though Prudy did not know that, — she only knew that it meant "yes."

"O, then I 'm coming right down, 'cause I like cake and 'serves. I won't go up to heaven till *bime-by!*"

Then she walked along the beam, and turned about to come down the ladders. Mrs. Parlin held her breath, and shut her eyes. She dared not look up, for she knew that if Prudy should take one false step, she must fall and be dashed in pieces!

But Prudy was not wise enough to fear anything. O no. She was only thinking very eagerly about crimson jellies and fruit-cake. She crept down the ladders without a thought of danger, — no more afraid than a fly that creeps down the window-pane.

The air was so still that the sound of every step was plainly heard, as her little feet went pat, — pat, — on the ladder rounds. God was taking care of her, — yes, at length the last round was reached, — she had got down, — she was safe!

"Thank God!" cried Mrs. Parlin, as she held little Prudy close to her heart; while Susy jumped for joy, exclaiming, "We 've got her! we 've got her! O, ain't you so happy, mamma?"

"O mamma, what you crying for?" said little Prudy, clinging about her neck. "Ain't I your little comfort? — there, now, you know what you *speaked* about! You said you 'd get some cake and verserves for me and Susy."

"*Sophie May.*"

MRS. WALKER'S BETSEY.

IT is now ten years since I spent a summer in the little village of Cliff Spring, as teacher in one of the public schools.

The village itself had no pretensions to beauty, natural or architectural; but all its surroundings were romantic and lovely. On one side was a winding river, bordered with beautiful willows; and on the other a lofty hill, thickly wooded. These woods, in spring and summer, were full of flowers and wild vines; and a clear, cold stream, that had its birth in a cavernous recess among the ledges, dashed over the rocks, and after many windings and plungings found its way to the river.

At the foot of the hill wound the railroad track, at some points nearly filling the space between the brook and the rocks, in others almost overhung by the latter. Some of the most delightful walks I ever knew were in this vicinity, and here the whole school would often come in the warm weather, for the Saturday's ramble.

It was on one of these summer rambles I first made the acquaintance of Mrs. Walker's Betsey. Not that her unenviable reputation had been concealed from my knowledge, by any means; but as she was not a member of my department, and was a very irregular attendant of any class, she had never yet come under my observation. I gathered that her parents had but lately come to live in Cliff Spring; that they were both ignorant and vicious; and that the girl was a sort of goblin sprite, — such a compound of mischief and malice as was never known before since the days of witchcraft. Was there an ugly profile drawn upon the anteroom wall, a green pumpkin found in the principal's hat, or an ink-bottle upset in the water-bucket? Mrs. Walker's Betsey was the first and constant object of suspicion. Did a teacher find a pair of tongs astride her chair, her shawl extra-bordered with burdocks.

her gloves filled with some ill-scented weed, or her india-rubbers cunningly nailed to the floor? half a hundred juvenile tongues were ready to proclaim poor Betsey as the undoubted delinquent; and this in spite of the fact that very few of these misdemeanors were actually proved against her. But whether proved or not, she accepted their sponsorship all the same, and laughed at or defied her accusers, as her mood might be.

That the girl was a character in her way, shrewd and sensible, though wholly uncultured, I was well satisfied, from all I heard; that she was sly, intractable, and revengeful I believed, I am sorry to say, upon very insufficient evidence.

One warm afternoon in July, the sun, which at morning had been clouded, blazed out fiercely at the hour of dismissal. Shrinking from the prospect of an unsheltered walk, I looked around the shelves of the anteroom for my sunshade, but it was nowhere to be found. I did not recollect having it with me in the morning, and believed it had been left at the school-house over night. The girls of my class constituted themselves a committee of search and inquiry, but to no purpose. The article was not in the house or yard, and then my committee resolved themselves into a jury, and, without a dissenting voice, pronounced Mrs. Walker's Betsey guilty of cribbing my little, old-fashioned, but vastly useful sunshade. She had been seen loitering in the anteroom, and afterward running away in great haste. The charge seemed reasonable enough, but as I could not learn that Betsey had ever been caught in a theft, or convicted of one, I requested the girls to keep the matter quiet, for a few days at least; to which they unwillingly consented.

"Remember, Miss Burke," said Alice Way, as we parted at her father's gate, "you promised us a nice walk after tea, to the place in the wood where you found the beautiful phlox yesterday. We want you to guide us straight to the spot, please."

"Yes," added Mary Graham, "and we will take our Botanies in our baskets, and be prepared to analyze the flowers, you know."

My assent was not reluctantly given; and when the sun was low in the west we set forth, walking nearly the whole distance in the shade of the hill. We climbed the ridge, rested a few moments, and then started in search of the beautiful patch of Lichnidia — white, pink, and purple — that I had found the afternoon previous in taking a "short cut" over the hill to the house of a friend I was wont to visit.

"Stop, Miss Burke!" came in suppressed tones from half my little group, as, emerging from a thicket, we came in sight of a queer object perched upon a little mound, among dead stick and leaves. It was a diminutive child, who, judging from her face alone, might be ten or eleven years of age. A little brown, weird face it was, with keen eyes peering out from a stringy mass of hair, that straggled about distractedly from the confinement of an old comb.

"*There*," whispered Matty Holmes, "there 's Mrs. Walker's Betsey, I do declare! She often goes home from school this way, which is shorter; and now she is playing truant. She 'll get a whipping if her mother finds it out."

"Miss Burke, Miss Burke!" cried Alice, "see what she has in her hand!" I looked, and there, to be sure, was my lost parasol.

"There, now! Did n't we say so!" "Don't she look guilty?" "Were n't we right?" "Impudent thing!" were the whispered ejaculations of my vigilance committee; but in truth the girl's appearance was unconcerned and innocent enough. She sat there, swaying herself about, opening and shutting the wonderful "instrument," holding it between her eyes and the light to ascertain the quality of the silk, and sticking a pin in the handle to try if it were real ivory or mere painted wood.

"Let 's dash in upon her and see her scamper," was the next benevolent suggestion whispered in my ear.

"No," I said. "I wish to speak to her alone, first. All of you stay here, out of sight, and I will return presently." They fell back, dissatisfied, and contented themselves with peeping and listening, while I advanced toward the forlorn child. She started a little as I approached, thrust the parasol behind her, and then pleasantly made room for me on the little hillock where she sat.

"Well, this *is* a nice place for a lounge," said I, dropping down beside her; "just large enough for two, and softer than any *tête-à-tête* in Mrs. Graham's parlor. Now I should like to know your name?" — for I thought it best to feign ignorance of her antecedents.

"Bets," was the ready reply.

"Betsey what?"

"Bets Walker, mother says, but I say Hamlin. That was father's name. 'T ain't no difference, though; it 's Bets any way."

"Well, Betsey, what do you suppose made this little mound we are sitting upon?" I asked, merely to gain time to think how best to approach the other topic.

"I don' know," she answered, looking up at me keenly. "Maybe a rock got covered up and growed over, ever so far down. Maybe an Injun 's buried there."

I told her I had seen larger mounds that contained Indian remains, but none so small as this.

"It might 'a' ben a baby, though," she returned, digging her brown toes among the leaves and winking her eyelids roguishly. "A papoose, you know; a real little Injun! I wish it had 'a' ben me. and I 'd 'a' ben buried here; I 'd 'a' liked it first-rate! Only I would n't 'a' wanted the girls should come and set over me. If I did n't want so bad to get to read the books father left, I 'd never go to school another day." And her brow darkened again with evil passions.

"Did your own father leave you books?"

"Yes, real good ones; only they 're old, and tore some. Mother could n't sell 'em for nothin'. so she lets me keep 'em. She sold everything else." Then suddenly changing her tone, she asked, slyly, "You hain't lost anything, — have you?"

"Yes," I answered; "I see you have my sunshade."

She held it up, laughing with boisterous triumph. "You left it hanging in that tree yonder," she said, pointing to a low-branching beech at a little distance. "It was kind o' careless, I think. S'posing it had rained!"

Astonishment kept me silent. How could I have forgotten, what I now so clearly recalled, my hanging the shade upon a tree, the previous afternoon, while I descended a ravine for flowers? I felt humiliated in the presence of the poor little wronged and neglected child.

For many days after this the girl did not come to school, nor did I once see her, though I thought of her daily with increasing interest.

During this time the principal of the school planned an excursion by railroad to a station ten miles distant, to be succeeded by a picnic on the lake shore. Great was the delight of the little ones, grown weary of their unvaried routine through the exhausting heats of July. Many were the councils called among the boys, many the enthusiastic discussions held among the girls, and seldom did they break up without leaving one or more subjects of controversy unsettled. But upon one point perfect harmony of opinion prevailed, and it was the only one against which I felt bound strongly to protest: this was the decision that Mrs. Walker's Betsey was quite unnecessary to the party, and consequently was to receive no notice.

"Why, Miss Burke! that *looking* girl!" cried Amy Pease, as I remonstrated. "She has n't a thing fit to wear, — if there were no other reason!" I reminded her that Betsey had a very decent basque, given her by the minister's wife, and that an old lawn skirt of mine could be tucked for her with very little trouble. "But she is such an awkward, uncouth creature! She would mortify us to death!" interposed Hattie Dale.

"She could carry no biscuits, nor cake, for she has no one to bake them for her," said another. "She would eat enormously, and make herself sick," objected little Nellie Day, a noted glutton.

In vain I combated these arguments, offering to take crackers and lemons enough for her share, and even urging the humanity of allowing her to make herself sick upon good things for once in her poverty-stricken life. Some other teachers joined me; but when the question was put to vote among the scholars, it received a hurried negative, as unanimous as it was noisy.

"And now I think of it," added Mattie Price, the principal's daughter, "the Walkers are out of the corporation, and so Betsey has no real right among us at all." This ended the matter.

All the night previous to the great excursion, I suffered severely from headache, which grew no better upon rising, and, as usual, increased in violence as the sun mounted higher upon its cloudless course. At half past nine, as the long train with its freight of smiling and expectant little ones moved from the depot, I was lying in a darkened room, with ice-bandages about my forehead, and my feverish pillow saturated with camphor and hartshorn.

The disappointment in itself was not much. I needed rest, and the utter stillness was very grateful to my overtasked nerves. Besides, the slight put upon poor Betsey had destroyed much of the pleasure of anticipation. I lay patiently until two o'clock, when, as I expected, the pain abated. At five, I was entirely free, and feeling much in need of a walk in the fresh air, which a slight shower had cooled and purified.

Choosing the shaded route, I walked out upon the hill, ascending by a gentle slope, and, book in hand, sat down under a tree, alternately reading and gazing upon the sweet rural picture that lay before me. Soon a pleasant languor crept over me. Dense wood and craggy hill, green valley and gushing brook, faded from sight and hearing, and I was asleep!

Probably half an hour elapsed before I opened my eyes and saw sitting beside me the same elfish little figure I had once before encountered in the wood. The same stringy hair, the same sunburned forehead and neck, the same tattered dress, the same wild, weird-looking eyes. In one hand she held my parasol, opened in a position to shade my face from a slanting sunbeam; with a small bush in the other she was protecting me from mosquitoes and other insect dangers.

"Well done, little Genius of the Wood; am I to be always indebted to you for finding what I lose?" I said, jumping up and shaking my dress free from leaves.

She laughed immoderately. "First you lose your shade in the woods, and now you 've gone and lost yourself! I guess you 'll have to keep me always," she giggled, trotting along beside me. "I was mighty scared when I see you lying there, and the sun creeping round through the trees, like a great red lion, going to spring at you and eat you up. I thought you 'd gone to the ride."

I explained the cause of my detention, and saw that she looked rather pleased; for, as I soon drew from her, she had been bitterly disappointed in the affair, and felt her rejection very keenly. She had come to this spot now for the sole purpose of peeping from behind some rock or tree at the return of the merry company, which would be at six o'clock.

"I coaxed old Walker and his wife to let me have some green corn and cucumbers, and I put on my best spencer and went to the depot this morning, but none of 'em asked me to get in. Hal Price kicked my basket over, too! I s'pose I was n't dressed fine enough. They all wore their Sunday things. I wish 't would rain and spile 'em. I do — *so!*"

I tried to console her, but she refused to listen, and went on with a fierce tirade, enumerating sundry disastrous events which she "wished would happen: she did *so!*" and giving vent to many very unchristian but very childlike denunciations.

All on a sudden she stopped, and we simultaneously raised our heads and listened. It was a deep, grinding, crashing sound, as of rocks sliding over and past each other; then a crackling, as of roots and branches twisted and wrenched from their places; then a jar, heavy and terrible, that reverberated through the forest, making the earth quake beneath our feet, and all the leafy branches tremble above us. We knew it instantly; there had been a heavy fall of rock not far from us; and with one exclamation, we started in the direction of the sound.

The place was reached in a moment; an enormous mass of rock and earth, in which many small trees were growing, had fallen directly upon the railroad track, and that too at a point where the stream wound nearest, and its bank made a steep descent upon the other side.

Dreadful as the spectacle was to me through apprehension for the coming train, I could only notice at that moment the wonderful change in Mrs. Walker's Betsey. She leaped about among the rocks, shrieking and wringing her hands; she grasped the uprooted trees, tugging wildly at them till the veins swelled purple in her forehead, and her flying hair looked as if every separate fibre writhed with horror. I had imagined before what the aspect of that strange little face might be in terror; now I saw it, and knew what a powerful nature lay hidden in that cramped, undeveloped form.

This lasted but a moment, however. Then came to both the soberer thought, What is to be done? It appeared that we were sole witnesses of the accident; and though the crash might have been heard at the village, who would think of a land slide? and upon the railroad!

Ten minutes must have elapsed before we could give the alarm, and in less time than that the cars were due. In that speechless breathless moment, before my duller ear perceived it, Betsey caught the sound of the approaching train, deadened as it was by the hill that lay between us. It was advancing at great speed; rushing on, — all that freight of joyous human life, — rushing on to certain destruction, into the very jaws of Death!

I was utterly paralyzed! Not so Mrs. Walker's Betsey.

"I 'm agoin' to run and *yell*," she said, and was off upon the instant. Screaming at the top of her voice, keeping near the edge of the bank, where she could be soonest seen from the approaching train, plunging through the underbrush, leaping over rocks, she dashed on to meet the cars. "Fire! Fire! Murder! Stop thieves! Hollo the house! Thieves! Mad dogs! Get out of the way, Old Dan Tucker!" were only a few of the variations of her warning voice.

I followed as I could, seemingly in a sort of nightmare; wondering why I did not scream, yet incapable of making a sound; expecting every moment to fall upon the rocks, yet taking my steps with a sureness and rapidity that astonished me even then.

Betsey's next move was to run back to me and tear my shawl from my shoulders, — a light crape of a bright crimson color. Then bending down a small sapling by throwing her whole weight upon it, she spread the shawl upon its top and allowed it to rebound. She called me to shake the tree, which I did vigorously. It stood at an angle of the road, upon a bank which commanded a long view, and was a most appropriate place to erect a signal. Then leaping upon the track, she bounded on like a deer, shouting and gesticulating with redoubled energy now that the train appeared in sight.

It was soon evident that the engineer was neither blind nor deaf, for the brakes were speedily applied, and the engine was reversed. Still it dashed on at fearful velocity, and Betsey turned and ran back toward the obstructed place in an agony of excitement. Gradually the speed lessened, the wheels obeyed their checks, and when at last they came to a full stop the cow-catcher was within four feet of the rock.

Many, seeing the danger, had already leaped off; many more, terrified, and scarcely conscious of the real nature of the danger, crowded the platforms, and pushed off those before them. It was a scene of wildest confusion, in the midst of which my heart sent up only the quivering cry of joy, "Saved, saved!" Betsey had climbed half-way up the bank, and thrown herself exhausted upon the loose gravel, with her apron drawn over her head. I picked my way down to the train to assist the frightened children. Mr. Price, the principal, was handing out his own three children, and teachers and pupils followed in swarms.

"Now, Miss Burke," said the principal, in a voice that grew strangely tremulous as he looked at the frightful mass before him, "I want to hear who it was that gave the alarm, and saved us from this hideous fate. Was it you?" I believe I never felt a glow of truer pleasure than then, as I answered quickly: "I had nothing to do with saving you, Mr. Price. I take no credit in the matter. The person to whom your thanks are due sits on the bank yonder, — Mrs. Walker's Betsey!"

Every eye wandered toward the crouching figure, who, with head closely covered, appeared indifferent to everything. Mr. Price opened his portemonnaie. "Here are ten dollars," he said, "which I wish you to give the girl for myself and children. Tell her that, as a school, she will hear from us again."

I went to Betsey's side, put the money in her hand, and tried to make her uncover her face. But she resolutely refused to do more than peep through one of the rents in her apron, as the whole school slowly and singly defiled past her in the narrow space between the train and the bank. A more crestfallen multitude I never saw, and the eyes that ventured to look upon the prostrate figure as they passed within a few feet of her had shame and contrition in their glances. Once only she whispered, as a haughty-looking boy went past, "That 's the boy that kicked over my basket. I wish I 'd 'a' let him gone to smash! I do — *so!*"

The children climbed over the rocks and went to their homes sadder and wiser for their lesson, and in twenty-four hours the track was again free from all obstruction.

The principal, though a man but little inclined to look for the angel side of such unprepossessing humanity as Mrs. Walker's Betsey, had too strong a sense of justice, and too much gratitude for his children's spared lives, not to make a very affecting appeal to the assembled school on the day following. A vote to consider her a member of the school, and entitled to all its privileges, met with no opposition; and a card of thanks, drawn up in feeling terms, received the signature of every pupil and teacher. A purse was next made up for her by voluntary contributions, amounting to twenty dollars; and to this were added a new suit, a quantity of books, and a handsome red shawl, in which her brunette skin and nicely combed jetty hair appeared to great advantage.

Betsey bore her honors meekly, and, no longer feeling that she was regarded as an intruder, came regularly to school, learned rapidly, and in her neat dress and improved manners gradually became an attractive, as she certainly was a most intelligent child.

In less than a year her mother died, and her drunken step-father removed to the far West, leaving her as a domestic in a worthy and wealthy family in Cliff Spring.

The privileges of school were still granted her, and amid the surroundings of comfort and refinement the change from Mrs. Walker's Betsey to Lizzie Hamlin became still more apparent. She rapidly rose from one class to another, and is now employed in the very school, and teaches the youngest brothers and sisters of the very scholars who, ten years ago, voted her a "nuisance" and a plague.

There is truth in the old rhyme, —

> "It is n't all in bringing up,
> Let men say what they will;
> Neglect may dim a silver cup, —
> It will be silver still!"

Helen B. Bostwick.

THE RAINBOW-PILGRIMAGE.

ONE summer afternoon, when I was about eight years of age, I was standing at an eastern window, looking at a beautiful rainbow that, bending from the sky, seemed to be losing itself in a thick, swampy wood about a quarter of a mile distant. We had just had a thunder-storm; but now the dark heavens had cleared up, a fresh breeze was blowing from the south, the rose-bushes by the window were dashing rain-drops against the panes, the robins were singing merrily from the cherry-trees, and all was brighter and pleasanter than ever. It happened that no one was in the room with me, then, but my brother Rufus, who was just recovering from a severe illness, and was sitting, propped up with pillows, in an easy-chair, looking out, with me, at the rainbow.

"See, brother," I said, "it drops right down among the cedars, where we go in the spring to find wintergreens!"

"Do you know, Gracie," said my brother, with a very serious face, "that, if you should go to the end of the rainbow, you would find there purses filled with money, and great pots of gold and silver?"

"Is it truly so?" I asked.

"Truly so," answered my brother, with a smile. Now, I was a simple-hearted child who believed everything that was told me, although I was again and again imposed upon ; so, without another word, I darted out of the door and set forth toward the wood. My brother called after me as loudly as he was able, but I did not heed him. I cared nothing for the wet grass, which was sadly drabbling my clean frock ; on and on I ran ; I was so sure that I knew just where that rainbow ended. I remember how glad and proud I was in my thoughts, and what fine presents I promised to all my friends out of my great riches.

So thinking, and laying delightful plans, almost before I knew it I had reached the cedar-grove, and the end of the rainbow was not there ! But I saw it shining down among the trees a little farther off ; so on and on I struggled, through the thick bushes and over logs, till I came within the sound of a stream which ran through the swamp. Then I thought, "What if the rainbow should come down right into the middle of that deep, muddy brook !" Ah ! but I was frightened for my heavy pots of gold and silver, and my purses of money. How should I ever find them there ? and what a time I should have getting them out ! I reached the bank of the stream, and "the end was not yet." But I could see it a little way off on the other side. I crossed the creek on a fallen tree, and still ran on, though my limbs seemed to give way, and my side ached with fatigue. The woods grew thicker and darker, the ground more wet and swampy, and I found, as many grown people had found before me, that there was rather hard travelling in a journey after riches. Suddenly I met in my way a large porcupine, who made himself still larger when he saw me, as a cross cat raises its back and makes tails at a dog. Fearing that he would shoot his sharp quills at me, and hit me all over, I ran from him as fast as my tired feet would carry me.

In my fright and hurry I forgot to keep my eye on the rainbow, as I had done before ; and when, at last, I remembered and looked for it, it was nowhere in sight ! It had quite faded away. When I saw that it was indeed gone, I burst into tears ; for I had lost all my treasures, and had nothing to show for my pilgrimage but muddy feet and a wet and torn frock. So I set out for home.

But I soon found that my troubles had only begun ; I could not find my way ; I was lost. I could not tell which was east or west, north or south, but wandered about here and there, crying and calling, though I knew that no one could hear me.

All at once I heard voices shouting and hallooing ; but, instead of being rejoiced at this, I was frightened, fearing that the Indians were upon me ! I crawled under some bushes, by the side of a large log, and lay perfectly still. I was wet, cold, scared, — altogether very miserable indeed ; yet, when the voices came near, I did not start up and show myself.

At last I heard my own name called ; but I remembered that Indians were very cunning, and thought they might have found it out some way ; so I did not answer. Then came a voice near me, that sounded like that of my eldest brother, who lived away from home, and whom I had not seen for many months ; but I dared not believe the voice was his. Soon some one sprang up on to the log by which I lay, and stood there calling. I could not see his face ; I could only see the tips of his toes, but by them I saw that he wore a nice pair of boots, and not moccasins. Yet I remembered that some Indians dressed like white folks. I knew a young chief who was quite a dandy ; who not only

> "Got him a coat and breeches,
> And looked like a Christian man,"

but actually wore a fine ruffled shirt *outside of all.* So I still kept quiet, till I heard shouted over me a pet name, which this brother had given me. It was the funniest name in the world.

I knew that no Indian knew of the name, as it was a little family secret ; so I sprang up, and caught my brother about the ankles. I hardly think that an Onondaga could have given a louder yell than he gave then ; and he jumped so that he fell off the log down by my side. But nobody was hurt ; and, after kissing me till he had kissed away all my tears, he hoisted me on to his shoulder, called my other brothers, who were hunting in different directions, and we all set out for home.

I had been gone nearly three hours, and had wandered a number of miles. My brother Joseph's coming and asking for me had first set them to inquiring and searching me out.

When I went into the room where my brother Rufus sat, he said, "Why, my poor little sister! I did not mean to send you off on such a wild-goose chase to the end of the rainbow. I thought you would know I was only quizzing you."

Then my eldest brother took me on his knee, and told me what the rainbow really was: that it was only painted air, and did not rest on the earth, so nobody could ever find the end; and that God had set it in the cloud to remind him and us of his promise never again to drown the world with a flood.

"O, I think *God's promise* would be a beautiful name for the rainbow!" I said.

"Yes," replied my mother, "but it tells us something more than that he will not send great floods upon the earth, — it tells us of his beautiful love always bending over us from the skies. And I trust that when my little girl sets forth on a pilgrimage to find God's love, she will be led by the rainbow of his promise through all the dark places of this world to 'treasures laid up in heaven,' better, far better, than silver or gold."

Grace Greenwood.

ON WHITE ISLAND.

I WELL remember my first sight of White Island, where we took up our abode on leaving the mainland. I was scarcely five years old; but from the upper windows of our dwelling in Portsmouth I had been shown the clustered masts of ships lying at the wharves along the Piscataqua River, faintly outlined against the sky, and, baby as I was, even then I was drawn with a vague longing seaward. How delightful was that long, first sail to the

Isles of Shoals! How pleasant the unaccustomed sound of the incessant ripple against the boat-side, the sight of the wide water and limitless sky, the warmth of the broad sunshine that made us blink like young sandpipers as we sat in triumph, perched among the household goods with which the little craft was laden! It was at sunset that we were set ashore on that loneliest, lovely rock, where the lighthouse looked down on us like some tall, black-capped giant, and filled me with awe and wonder. At its base a few goats were grouped on the rock, standing out dark against the red sky as I looked up at them. The stars were beginning to twinkle; the wind blew cold, charged with the sea's sweetness; the sound of many waters half bewildered me. Some one began to light the lamps in the tower. Rich red and golden, they swung round in mid-air; everything was strange and fascinating and new. We entered the quaint little old stone cottage that was for six years our home. How curious it seemed, with its low, whitewashed ceiling, and deep window-seats, showing the great thickness of the walls made to withstand the breakers, with whose force we soon grew acquainted! A blissful home the little house became to the children who entered it that quiet evening and slept for the first time lulled by the murmur of the encircling sea. I do not think a happier triad ever existed than we were, living in that profound isolation. It takes so little to make a healthy child happy; and we never wearied of our few resources. True, the winters seemed as long as a whole year to our little minds, but they were pleasant, nevertheless. Into the deep window-seats we climbed, and with pennies (for which we had no other use) made round holes in the thick frost, breathing on them till they were warm, and peeped out at the bright, fierce, windy weather, watching the vessels scudding over the intensely dark blue sea, all feather-white where the short waves broke hissing in the cold, and the sea-fowl soaring aloft or tossing on the water; or, in calmer days, we saw how the stealthy Star-Islander paddled among the ledges, or lay for hours stretched on the wet sea-weed, watching for wild-fowl with his gun. Sometimes the round head of a seal moved about among the kelp-covered rocks.

In the long, covered walk that bridged the gorge between the lighthouse and the house we played in stormy days, and every evening it was a fresh excitement to watch the lighting of the lamps, and think how far the lighthouse sent its rays, and how many hearts it gladdened with assurance of safety. As I grew older, I was allowed to kindle the lamps sometimes myself. That was indeed a pleasure. So little a creature as I might do that much for the great world! We waited for the spring with an eager longing; the advent of the growing grass, the birds and flowers and insect life, the soft skies and softer winds, the everlasting beauty of the thousand tender tints that clothed the world, — these things brought us unspeakable bliss. To the heart of Nature one must needs be drawn in such a life; and very soon I learned how richly she repays in deep refreshment the reverent love of her worshipper. With the first warm days we built our little mountains of wet gravel on the beach, and danced after the sandpipers at the edge of the foam, shouted to the gossiping kittiwakes that fluttered above, or watched the pranks of the burgomaster gull, or cried to the crying loons. The gannet's long white wings stretched overhead, perhaps, or the dusky shag made a sudden shadow in mid-air, or we startled on some lonely ledge the great blue heron that flew off, trailing legs and wings, stork-like, against the clouds. Or, in the sunshine on the bare rocks, we cut from the broad, brown leaves of the slippery, varnished kelps, grotesque shapes of man and bird and beast, that withered in the wind and blew away; or we fashioned rude boats from bits of driftwood, manned them with a weird crew of kelpies, and set them adrift on the great deep, to float we cared not whither.

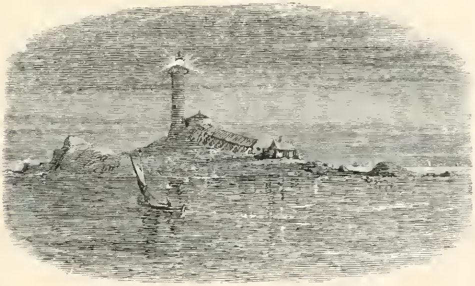
We played with the empty limpet-shells; they were mottled gray and brown, like the song-sparrow's breast. We launched fleets of purple mussel-shells on the still pools in the rocks, left by the tide, — pools that were like bits of fallen rainbow with the wealth of the sea, with tints of delicate sea-weed, crimson and green and ruddy brown and violet; where wandered the pearly eolis with rosy spines and fairy horns, and the large round sea-urchins, like a boss upon a shield, were fastened here and there on the rock at the bottom, putting out from their green, prickly spikes transparent tentacles to seek their invisible food. Rosy and lilac star-fish clung to the sides ; in some dark nook perhaps a holothuria unfolded its perfect ferns, a lovely, warm buff color, delicate as frost-work ; little forests of coralline moss grew up in stillness, gold-colored shells crept about, and now and then flashed the silver-darting fins of slender minnows. The dimmest recesses were haunts of sea-anemones that opened wide their starry flowers to the flowing tide, or drew themselves together, and hung in large, half-transparent drops, like clusters of some strange, amber-colored fruit, along the crevices as the water ebbed away. Sometimes we were cruel enough to capture a female lobster hiding in a deep cleft, with her millions of mottled eggs ; or we laughed to see the hermit-crabs challenge each other, and come out and fight a deadly battle till the stronger overcame, and, turning the weaker topsy-turvy, possessed himself of his ampler cockle-shell, and scuttled off with it triumphant.

I remember in the spring kneeling on the ground to seek the first blades of grass that pricked through the soil, and bringing them into the house to study and wonder over. Better than a shop full of toys they were to me ! Whence came their color ? How did they draw their sweet, refreshing tint from the brown earth, or the limpid air, or the white light ? Chemistry was not at hand to answer me, and all her wisdom would not have dispelled the wonder. Later the little scarlet pimpernel charmed me. It seemed more than a flower ; it was like a human thing. I knew it by its homely name of poor-man's weather-glass. It was so much wiser than I, for when the sky was yet without a cloud, softly it clasped its little red petals together, folding its golden heart in safety from the shower that was sure to come ! How could it know so much ? Here is a question science cannot answer. The pimpernel grows everywhere about the islands, in every cleft and cranny where a suspicion of sustenance for its slender root can lodge ; and it is one of the most exquisite of flowers, so rich in color, so quaint and dainty in its method of growth. I never knew its silent warning fail. I wondered much how every flower knew what to do and to be : why the morning-glory did n't forget sometimes, and bear a cluster of elder-bloom, or the elder hang out pennons of gold and purple like the iris, or the golden-rod suddenly blaze out a scarlet plume, the color of the pimpernel, was a mystery to my childish thought. And why did the sweet wild primrose wait till after sunset to unclose its pale yellow buds; why did it unlock its treasure of rich perfume to the night alone?

Few flowers bloomed for me upon the lonesome rock; but I made the most of all I had, and neither knew of nor desired more. Ah, how beautiful they were! Tiny stars of crimson sorrel threaded on their long brown stems; the blackberry blossoms in bridal white; the surprise of the blue-eyed grass; the crowfoot flowers, like drops of yellow gold spilt about among the short grass and over the moss; the rich, blue-purple beach-pea, the sweet, spiked germander, and the homely, delightful yarrow that grows thickly on all the islands. Sometimes its broad clusters of dull white bloom are stained a lovely reddish-purple, as if with the light of sunset. I never saw it colored so elsewhere. Dandelions, buttercups, and clover were not denied to us; though we had no daisies nor violets nor wild roses, no asters, but gorgeous spikes of golden-rod, and wonderful wild morning-glories, whose long, pale ivory buds I used to find in the twilight, glimmering among the dark leaves, waiting for the touch of dawn to unfold and become each an exquisite incarnate blush, — the perfect color of a South Sea shell. They ran wild, knotting and twisting about the rocks, and smothering the loose boulders in the gorges with lush green leaves and pink blossoms.

Many a summer morning have I crept out of the still house before any one was awake, and, wrapping myself closely from the chill wind of dawn, climbed to the top of the high cliff called the Head to watch the sunrise. Pale grew the lighthouse flame before the broadening day as, nestled in a crevice at the cliff's edge, I watched the shadows draw away and morning break. Facing the east and south, with all the Atlantic before me, what happiness was mine as the deepening rose-color flushed the delicate cloud-flocks that dappled the sky, where the gulls soared, rosy too, while the calm sea blushed beneath. Or perhaps it was a cloudless sunrise with a sky of orange-red, and the sea-line silver-blue against it, peaceful as heaven. Infinite variety of beauty always awaited me, and filled me with an absorbing, unreasoning joy such as makes the song-sparrow sing, — a sense of perfect bliss. Coming back in the sunshine, the morning-glories would lift up their faces, all awake, to my adoring gaze. It seemed as if they had gathered the peace of the golden morning in their still depths even as my heart had gathered it.

Celia Thaxter.



THE CRUISE OF THE DOLPHIN.

EVERY Rivermouth boy looks upon the sea as being in some way mixed up with his destiny. While he is yet a baby lying in his cradle, he hears the dull, far-off boom of the breakers; when he is older, he wanders by the sandy shore, watching the waves that come plunging up the beach like white-maned sea-horses, as Thoreau calls them; his eye follows the lessening sail as it fades into the blue horizon, and he burns for the time when he shall stand on the quarter-deck of his own ship, and go sailing proudly across that mysterious waste of waters.

Then the town itself is full of hints and flavors of the sea. The gables and roofs of the houses facing eastward are covered with red rust, like the flukes of old anchors; a salty smell pervades the air, and dense gray fogs, the very breath of Ocean, periodically creep up into the quiet streets and envelop everything. The terrific storms that lash the coast; the kelp and spars, and sometimes the bodies of drowned men, tossed on shore by the scornful waves; the shipyards, the wharves, and the tawny fleet of fishing-smacks yearly fitted out at Rivermouth, — these things, and a hundred other, feed the imagination and fill the brain of every healthy boy with dreams of adventure. He learns to swim almost as soon as he can walk; he draws in with his mother's milk the art of handling an oar: he is born a sailor, whatever he may turn out to be afterwards.

To own the whole or a portion of a row-boat is his earliest ambition. No wonder that I, born to this life, and coming back to it with freshest sympathies, should have caught the prevailing infection. No wonder I longed to buy a part of the trim little sail-boat Dolphin, which chanced just then to be in the market. This was in the latter part of May.

Three shares, at five or six dollars each, I forget which, had already been taken by Phil Adams, Fred Langdon, and Binny Wallace. The fourth and remaining share hung fire. Unless a purchaser could be found for this, the bargain was to fall through.

I am afraid I required but slight urging to join in the investment. I had four dollars and fifty cents on hand, and the treasurer of the Centipedes advanced me the balance, receiving my silver pencil-case as ample security. It was a proud moment when I stood on the wharf with my partners, inspecting the Dolphin, moored at the foot of a very slippery flight of steps. She was painted white with a green stripe outside, and on the stern a yellow dolphin, with its scarlet mouth wide open, stared with a surprised expression at its own reflection in the water. The boat was a great bargain.

I whirled my cap in the air, and ran to the stairs leading down from the wharf, when a hand was laid gently on my shoulder. I turned, and faced Captain Nutter. I never saw such an old sharp-eye as he was in those days.

I knew he would n't be angry with me for buying a row-boat; but I also knew that the little bowsprit suggesting a jib, and the tapering mast ready for its few square yards of canvas, were trifles not likely to meet his approval. As far as rowing on the river, among the wharves, was concerned, the Captain had long since withdrawn his decided objections, having convinced himself, by going out with me several times, that I could manage a pair of sculls as well as anybody.

I was right in my surmises. He commanded me, in the most emphatic terms, never to go out in the Dolphin without leaving the mast in the boat-house. This curtailed my anticipated sport, but the pleasure of having a pull whenever I wanted it remained. I never disobeyed the Captain's orders touching the sail, though I sometimes extended my row beyond the points he had indicated.

The river was dangerous for sail-boats. Squalls, without the slightest warning, were of frequent occurrence; scarcely a year passed that six or seven persons were not drowned under the very windows of the town, and these, oddly enough, were generally sea-captains, who either did not understand the river, or lacked the skill to handle a small craft.

A knowledge of such disasters, one of which I witnessed, consoled me somewhat when I saw Phil Adams skimming over the water in a spanking breeze with every stitch of canvas set. There were few better yachtsmen than Phil Adams. He usually went sailing alone, for both Fred Langdon and Binny Wallace were under the same restrictions I was.

Not long after the purchase of the boat, we planned an excursion to Sandpeep Island, the last of the islands in the harbor. We proposed to start early in the morning, and return with the tide in the moonlight. Our only difficulty was to obtain a whole day's exemption from school, the customary half-holiday not being long enough for our picnic. Somehow, we could n't work it ; but fortune arranged it for us. I may say here, that, whatever else I did, I never played truant in my life.

One afternoon the four owners of the Dolphin exchanged significant glances when Mr. Grimshaw announced from the desk that there would be no school the following day, he having just received intelligence of the death of his uncle in Boston. I was sincerely attached to Mr. Grimshaw, but I am afraid that the death of his uncle did not affect me as it ought to have done.

We were up before sunrise the next morning, in order to take advantage of the flood tide, which waits for no man. Our preparations for the cruise were made the previous evening. In the way of eatables and drinkables, we had stored in the stern of the Dolphin a generous bag of hardtack (for the chowder), a piece of pork to fry the cunners in, three gigantic apple-pies (bought at Pettingil's), half a dozen lemons, and a keg of spring-water, — the last-named article we slung over the side, to keep it cool, as soon as we got under way. The crockery and the bricks for our camp-stove we placed in the bows with the groceries, which included sugar, pepper, salt, and a bottle of pickles. Phil Adams contributed to the outfit a small tent of unbleached cotton cloth, under which we intended to take our nooning.

We unshipped the mast, threw in an extra oar, and were ready to embark. I do not believe that Christopher Columbus, when he started on his rather successful voyage of discovery, felt half the responsibility and importance that weighed upon me as I sat on the middle seat of the Dolphin, with my oar resting in the row-lock. I wonder if Christopher Columbus quietly slipped out of the house without letting his estimable family know what he was up to?

How calm and lovely the river was! Not a ripple stirred on the glassy surface, broken only by the sharp cutwater of our tiny craft. The sun, as round and red as an August moon, was by this time peering above the water-line.

The town had drifted behind us, and we were entering among the group of islands. Sometimes we could almost touch with our boat-hook the shelving banks on either side. As we neared the mouth of the harbor, a little breeze now and then wrinkled the blue water, shook the spangles from the foliage, and gently lifted the spiral mist-wreaths that still clung along-shore. The measured dip of our oars and the drowsy twitterings of the birds seemed to mingle with, rather than break, the enchanted silence that reigned about us.

The scent of the new clover comes back to me now, as I recall that delicious morning when we floated away in a fairy boat down a river like a dream!

The sun was well up when the nose of the Dolphin nestled against the snow-white bosom of Sandpeep Island. This island, as I have said before, was the last of the cluster, one side of it being washed by the sea. We landed on the river side, the sloping sands and quiet water affording us a good place to moor the boat.

It took us an hour or two to transport our stores to the spot selected for the encampment. Having pitched our tent, using the five oars to support the canvas, we got out our lines, and went down the rocks seaward to fish. It was early for cunners, but we were lucky enough to catch as nice a mess as ever you saw. A cod for the chowder was not so easily secured. At last Binny Wallace hauled in a plump little fellow crusted all over with flaky silver.

To skin the fish, build our fireplace, and cook the dinner, kept us busy the next two hours. The fresh air and the exercise had given us the appetites of wolves, and we were about famished by the time the savory mixture was ready for our clam-shell saucers.

I shall not insult the rising generation on the seaboard by telling them how delectable is a chowder compounded and eaten in this Robinson Crusoe fashion. As for the boys who live inland, and know naught of such marine feasts, my heart is full of pity for them. What wasted lives! Not to know the delights of a clam-bake, not to love chowder, to be ignorant of lobscouse!

How happy we were, we four, sitting cross-legged in the crisp salt grass, with the invigorating sea-breeze blowing gratefully through our hair! What a joyous thing was life, and how far off seemed death, — death, that lurks in all pleasant places, and was so near!

The banquet finished, Phil Adams drew forth from his pocket a handful of sweetfern cigars; but as none of the party could indulge without risk of becoming sick, we all, on one pretext or another, declined, and Phil smoked by himself.

The wind had freshened by this, and we found it comfortable to put on the jackets which had been thrown aside in the heat of the day. We strolled along the beach and gathered large quantities of the fairy-woven Iceland moss, which, at certain seasons, is washed to these shores; then we played at ducks and drakes, and then, the sun being sufficiently low, we went in bathing.

Before our bath was ended a slight change had come over the sky and sea; fleecy-white clouds scudded here and there, and a muffled moan from the breakers caught our ears from time to time. While we were dressing, a few hurried drops of rain came lisping down, and we adjourned to the tent to await the passing of the squall.

"We 're all right, anyhow," said Phil Adams. "It won't be much of a blow, and we 'll be as snug as a bug in a rug, here in the tent, particularly if we have that lemonade which some of you fellows were going to make."

By an oversight, the lemons had been left in the boat. Binny Wallace volunteered to go for them.

"Put an extra stone on the painter, Binny," said Adams, calling after him; "it would be awkward to have the Dolphin give us the slip and return to port minus her passengers."

"That it would," answered Binny, scrambling down the rocks.

Sandpeep Island is diamond-shaped, — one point running out into the sea, and the other looking towards the town. Our tent was on the river side. Though the Dolphin was also on the same side, it lay out of sight by the beach at the farther extremity of the island.

Binny Wallace had been absent five or six minutes, when we heard him calling our several names in tones that indicated distress or surprise, we could not tell which. Our first thought was, "The boat has broken adrift!"

We sprung to our feet and hastened down to the beach. On turning the bluff which hid the mooring-place from our view, we found the conjecture correct. Not only was the Dolphin afloat, but poor little Binny Wallace was standing in the bows with his arms stretched helplessly towards us, — *drifting out to sea!*

"Head the boat in shore!" shouted Phil Adams.

Wallace ran to the tiller; but the slight cockle-shell merely swung round and drifted broadside on. O, if we had but left a single scull in the Dolphin!

"Can you swim it?" cried Adams, desperately, using his hand as a speaking-trumpet, for the distance between the boat and the island widened momently.

Binny Wallace looked down at the sea, which was covered with white caps, and made a despairing gesture. He knew and we knew, that the stoutest swimmer could not live forty seconds in those angry waters.

A wild, insane light came into Phil Adams's eyes, as he stood knee-deep in boiling surf, and for an instant I think he meditated plunging into the ocean after the receding boat.

The sky darkened, and an ugly look stole rapidly over the broken surface of the sea.

Binny Wallace half rose from his seat in the stern, and waved his hand to us in token of farewell. In spite of the distance, increasing every instant, we could see his face plainly. The anxious expression it wore at first had passed. It was pale and meek now, and

I love to think there was a kind of halo about it, like that which painters place around the forehead of a saint. So he drifted away.

The sky grew darker and darker. It was only by straining our eyes through the unnatural twilight that we could keep the Dolphin in sight. The figure of Binny Wallace was no longer visible, for the boat itself had dwindled to a mere white dot on the black water. Now we lost it, and our hearts stopped throbbing; and now the speck appeared again, for an instant, on the crest of a high wave.

Finally it went out like a spark, and we saw it no more. Then we gazed at each other, and dared not speak.

Absorbed in following the course of the boat, we had scarcely noticed the huddled inky clouds that sagged down all around us. From these threatening masses, seamed at intervals with pale lightning, there now burst a heavy peal of thunder that shook the ground under our feet. A sudden squall struck the sea, ploughing deep white furrows into it, and at the same instant a single piercing shriek rose above the tempest, — the frightened cry of a gull swooping over the island. How it startled us!

It was impossible to keep our footing on the beach any longer. The wind and the breakers would have swept us into the ocean if we had not clung to each other with the desperation of drowning men. Taking advantage of a momentary lull, we crawled up the sands on our hands and knees, and, pausing in the lee of the granite ledge to gain breath, returned to the camp, where we found that the gale had snapped all the fastenings of the tent but one. Held by this, the puffed-out canvas swayed in the wind like a balloon. It was a task of some difficulty to secure it, which we did by beating down the canvas with the oars.

After several trials, we succeeded in setting up the tent on the leeward side of the ledge. Blinded by the vivid flashes of lightning, and drenched by the rain, which fell in torrents, we crept, half dead with fear and anguish, under our flimsy shelter. Neither the anguish nor the fear was on our own account, for we were comparatively safe, but for poor little Binny Wallace, driven out to sea in the merciless gale. We shuddered to think of him in that frail shell, drifting on and on to his grave, the sky rent with lightning over his head, and the green abysses yawning beneath him. We fell to crying, the three of us, and cried I know not how long.

Meanwhile the storm raged with augmented fury. We were obliged to hold on to the ropes of the tent to prevent it blowing away. The spray from the river leaped several yards up the rocks and clutched at us malignantly. The very island trembled with the concussions of the sea beating upon it, and at times I fancied that it had broken loose from its foundation, and was floating off with us. The breakers, streaked with angry phosphorus, were fearful to look at.

The wind rose higher and higher, cutting long slits in the tent, through which the rain poured incessantly. To complete the sum of our miseries, the night was at hand. It came down suddenly, at last, like a curtain, shutting in Sandpeep Island from all the world.

It was a dirty night, as the sailors say. The darkness was something that could be felt as well as seen, — it pressed down upon one with a cold, clammy touch. Gazing into the hollow blackness, all sorts of imaginable shapes seemed to start forth from vacancy, — brilliant colors, stars, prisms, and dancing lights. What boy, lying awake at night, has not amused or terrified himself by peopling the spaces round his bed with these phenomena of his own eyes?

"I say," whispered Fred Langdon, at length, clutching my hand, "don't you see things — out there — in the dark?"

"Yes, yes, — Binny Wallace's face!"

I added to my own nervousness by making this avowal; though for the last ten minutes I had seen little besides that star-pale face with its angelic hair and brows. First a slim yellow circle, like the nimbus round the moon, took shape and grew sharp against the darkness; then this faded gradually, and there was the Face, wearing the same sad, sweet look it wore when he waved his hand to us across the awful water. This optical illusion kept repeating itself.

"And I, too," said Adams. "I see it every now and then, outside there. What would n't I give if it really was poor little Wallace looking in at us! O boys, how shall we dare to go back to the town without him? I 've wished a hundred times, since we 've been sitting here, that I was in his place, alive or dead!"

We dreaded the approach of morning as much as we longed for it. The morning would tell us all. Was it possible for the Dolphin to outride such a storm? There was a lighthouse on Mackerel Reef, which lay directly in the course the boat had taken, when it disappeared. If the Dolphin had caught on this reef, perhaps Binny Wallace was safe. Perhaps his cries had been heard by the keeper of the light. The man owned a life-boat, and had rescued several people. Who could tell?

Such were the questions we asked ourselves again and again, as we lay in each other's arms waiting for daybreak. What an endless night it was! I have known months that did not seem so long.

Our position was irksome rather than perilous; for the day was certain to bring us relief from the town, where our prolonged absence, together with the storm, had no doubt excited the liveliest alarm for our safety. But the cold, the darkness, and the suspense were hard to bear.

Our soaked jackets had chilled us to the bone. To keep warm, we lay huddled together so closely that we could hear our hearts beat above the tumult of sea and sky.

We used to laugh at Fred Langdon for always carrying in his pocket a small vial of essence of peppermint or sassafras, a few drops of which, sprinkled on a lump of loaf-sugar, he seemed to consider a great luxury. I don't know what would have become of us at this crisis, if it had n't been for that omnipresent bottle of hot stuff. We poured the stinging liquid over our sugar, which had kept dry in a sardine-box, and warmed ourselves with frequent doses.

After four or five hours the rain ceased, the wind died away to a moan, and the sea — no longer raging like a maniac — sobbed and sobbed with a piteous human voice all along the coast. And well it might, after that night's work. Twelve sail of the Gloucester fishing fleet had gone down with every soul on board, just outside of Whale's-back Light. Think of the wide grief that follows in the wake of one wreck; then think of the despairing women who wrung their hands and wept, the next morning, in the streets of Gloucester, Marblehead, and Newcastle!

Though our strength was nearly spent, we were too cold to sleep. Fred Langdon was the earliest to discover a filmy, luminous streak in the sky, the first glimmering of sunrise.

"Look, it is nearly daybreak!"

While we were following the direction of his finger, a sound of distant oars fell on our ears.

We listened breathlessly, and as the dip of the blades became more audible, we discerned two foggy lights, like will-o'-the-wisps, floating on the river.

Running down to the water's edge, we hailed the boats with all our might. The call was heard, for the oars rested a moment in the row-locks, and then pulled in towards the island.

It was two boats from the town, in the foremost of which we could now make out the figures of Captain Nutter and Binny Wallace's father. We shrunk back on seeing *him*.

"Thank God!" cried Mr. Wallace, fervently, as he leaped from the wherry without waiting for the bow to touch the beach.

But when he saw only three boys standing on the sands, his eye wandered restlessly about in quest of the fourth; then a deadly pallor overspread his features.

Our story was soon told. A solemn silence fell upon the crowd of rough boatmen gathered round, interrupted only by a stifled sob from one poor old man, who stood apart from the rest.

The sea was still running too high for any small boat to venture out; so it was arranged that the wherry should take us back to town, leaving the yawl, with a picked crew, to hug the island until daybreak, and then set forth in search of the Dolphin.

Though it was barely sunrise when we reached town, there were a great many people assembled at the landing, eager for intelligence from missing boats. Two picnic parties had started down river the day before, just previous to the gale, and nothing had been heard of them. It turned out that the pleasure-seekers saw their danger in time, and ran ashore on one of the least exposed islands, where they passed the night. Shortly after our own arrival they appeared off Rivermouth, much to the joy of their friends, in two shattered, dismasted boats.

The excitement over, I was in a forlorn state, physically and mentally. Captain Nutter put me to bed between hot blankets, and sent Kitty Collins for the doctor. I was wandering in my mind, and fancied myself still on Sandpeep Island: now I gave orders to Wallace how to manage the boat, and now I cried because the rain was pouring in on me through the holes in the tent. Towards evening a high fever set in, and it was many days before my grandfather deemed it prudent to tell me that the Dolphin had been found, floating keel upwards, four miles southeast of Mackerel Reef.

Poor little Binny Wallace! How strange it seemed, when I went to school again, to see that empty seat in the fifth row! How gloomy the play-ground was, lacking the sunshine of his gentle, sensitive face! One day a folded sheet slipped from my algebra; it was the last note he ever wrote me. I could n't read it for the tears.

What a pang shot across my heart the afternoon it was whispered through the town that a body had been washed ashore at Grave Point, — the place where we bathed. We bathed there no more! How well I remember the funeral, and what a piteous sight it was afterwards to see his familiar name on a small headstone in the Old South Burying-Ground!

Poor little Binny Wallace! Always the same to me. The rest of us have grown up into hard, worldly men, fighting the fight of life; but you are forever young, and gentle, and pure; a part of my own childhood that time cannot wither; always a little boy, always poor little Binny Wallace!

T. B. Aldrich.

A YOUNG MAHOMETAN.

THE bedrooms in the old house had tapestry hangings, which were full of Bible history. The subject of the one which chiefly attracted my attention was Hagar and her son Ishmael. I every day admired the beauty of the youth, and pitied the forlorn state of his mother and himself in the wilderness.

At the end of the gallery into which these tapestry rooms opened was one door, which, having often in vain attempted to open, I concluded to be locked. Every day I endeavored to turn the lock. Whether by constantly trying I loosened it, or whether the door was not locked, but only fastened tight by time, I know not; but, to my great joy, as I was one day trying it as usual, it gave way, and I found myself in this so long-desired room.

It proved to be a very large library. If you never spent whole mornings alone in a large library, you cannot conceive the pleasure of taking down books in the constant hope of finding an entertaining one among them; yet, after many days, meeting with nothing but disappointment, it becomes less pleasant. All the books within my reach were folios of the gravest cast. I could understand very little that I read in them, and the old dark print and the length of the lines made my eyes ache.

When I had almost resolved to give up the search as fruitless, I perceived a volume lying in an obscure corner of the room. I opened it. It was a charming print; the letters were almost as large as the type of the family Bible. Upon the first page I looked into I saw the name of my favorite Ishmael, whose face I knew so well from the tapestry in the antique bedrooms, and whose history I had often read in the Bible.

I sat myself down to read this book with the greatest eagerness. I shall be quite ashamed to tell you the strange effect it had on me. I scarcely ever heard a word addressed to me from morning till night. If it were not for the old servants saying, "Good morning to you, Miss Margaret," as they passed me in the long passages, I should have been the greater part of the day in as perfect a solitude as Robinson Crusoe.

Many of the leaves in "Mahometanism Explained" were torn out, but enough remained to make me imagine that Ishmael was the true son of Abraham. I read here, that the true descendants

of Abraham were known by a light which streamed from the middle of their foreheads, and that Ishmael's father and mother first saw this light streaming from his forehead as he was lying asleep in the cradle.

I was very sorry so many of the leaves were gone, for it was as entertaining as a fairy tale. I used to read the history of Ishmael, and then go and look at him in the tapestry, and then return to his history again. When I had almost learned the history of Ishmael by heart, I read the rest of the book, and then I came to the history of Mahomet, who was there said to be the last descendant of Abraham.

If Ishmael had engaged so much of my thoughts, how much more so must Mahomet! His history was full of nothing but wonders from the beginning to the end. The book said that those who believed all the wonderful stories which were related of Mahomet were called Mahometans, and True Believers; I concluded that I must be a Mahometan, for I believed every word I read.

At length I met with something which I also believed, though I trembled as I read it; this was that, after we are dead, we are to pass over a narrow bridge, which crosses a bottomless gulf. The bridge was described to be no wider than a silken thread; and all who were not Mahometans would slip on one side of this bridge, and drop into the tremendous gulf that had no bottom. I considered myself as a Mahometan, yet I was perfectly giddy whenever I thought of passing over this bridge.

One day, seeing the old lady who lived here totter across the room, a sudden terror seized me, for I thought how she would ever be able to get over the bridge. Then, too, it was that I first recollected that my mother would also be in imminent danger. I imagined she had never heard the name of Mahomet, because, as I foolishly conjectured, this book had been locked up for ages in the library, and was utterly unknown to the rest of the world.

All my desire was now to tell them the discovery I had made; for I thought, when they knew of the existence of "Mahometanism Explained," they would read it, and become Mahometans to insure themselves a safe passage over the silken bridge. But it wanted more courage than I possessed to break the matter to my intended converts. I must acknowledge that I had been reading without leave; and the habit of never speaking, or being spoken to, considerably increased the difficulty.

My anxiety on this subject threw me into a fever. I was so ill that my mother thought it necessary to sleep in the same room with me. In the middle of the night I could not resist the strong desire I felt to tell her what preyed so much on my mind. I awoke her out of a sound sleep, and begged she would be so kind as to be a Mahometan. She was very much alarmed;—she thought I was delirious, and I believe I was; for I tried to explain the reason of my request, but it was in such an incoherent manner that she could not at all comprehend what I was talking about.

The next day a physician was sent for, and he discovered, by several questions that he put to me, that I had read myself into a fever. He gave me medicines, and ordered me to be kept very quiet, and said he hoped in a few days I should be very well; but as it was a new case to him, he never having attended a little Mahometan before, if any lowness continued after he had removed the fever, he would, with my mother's permission, take me home with him to study this extraordinary case at leisure. He added, that he could then hold a consultation with his wife, who was often very useful to him in prescribing remedies for the maladies of his younger patients.

In a few days he fetched me away. His wife was in the carriage with him. Having heard what he said about her prescriptions, I expected, between the doctor and his lady, to undergo a severe course of medicine, especially as I heard him very formally ask her advice as to what was good for a Mahometan fever, the moment after he had handed me into his carriage.

She studied a little while, and then she said, a ride to Harlow Fair would not be amiss. He said he was entirely of her opinion, because it suited him to go there to buy a horse.

During the ride they entered into conversation with me, and in answer to their questions, I was relating to them the solitary manner in which I had passed my time, how I found out the library, and what I had read in that fatal book which had so heated my imagination,—when we arrived at the fair; and Ishmael, Mahomet, and the narrow bridge vanished out of my head in an instant.

Before I went home the good lady explained to me very seriously the error into which I had fallen. I found that, so far from "Mahometanism Explained" being a book concealed only in this library, it was well known to every person of the least information.

The Turks, she told me, were Mahometans. And she said that, if the leaves of my favorite book had not been torn out, I should have read that the author of it did not mean to give the fabulous stories here related as true, but only wrote it as giving a history of what the Turks, who are a very ignorant people, believe concerning Mahomet.

By the good offices of the physician and his lady, I was carried home, at the end of a month, perfectly cured of the error into which I had fallen, and very much ashamed of having believed so many absurdities.

Mary Lamb.

THE LITTLE PERSIAN.

AMONG the Persians there is a sect called the Sooffees, and one of the most distinguished saints of this sect was Abdool Kauder.

It is related that, in early childhood, he was smitten with the desire of devoting himself to sacred things, and wished to go to Bagdad to obtain knowledge. His mother gave her consent; and taking out eighty deenars (a denomination of money used in Persia), she told him that, as he had a brother, half of that would be all his inheritance.

She made him promise, solemnly, never to tell a lie, and then bade him farewell, exclaiming, "Go, my son; I give thee to God. We shall not meet again till the day of judgment!"

He went on till he came near to Hamadan, when the company with which he was travelling was plundered by sixty horsemen. One of the robbers asked him what he had got. "Forty deenars," said Abdool Kauder, "are sewed under my garment." The fellow laughed, thinking that he was joking him. "What have you got?" said another. He gave the same answer.

When they were dividing the spoil, he was called to an eminence where their chief stood. "What property have you, my little fellow?" said he. "I have told two of your people already," replied the boy. "I have forty deenars sewed up carefully in my clothes." The chief desired them to be ripped open, and found the money.

"And how came you," said he, with surprise, "to declare so openly what has been so carefully hidden?"

"Because," Abdool Kauder replied, "I will not be false to my mother, whom I have promised that I will never conceal the truth."

"Child!" said the robber, "hast thou such a sense of duty to thy mother, at thy years, and am I insensible, at my age, of the duty I owe to my God? Give me thy hand, innocent boy," he continued, "that I may swear repentance upon it." He did so; and his followers were all alike struck with the scene.

"You have been our leader in guilt," said they to their chief, "be the same in the path of virtue!" and they instantly, at his order, made restitution of the spoil, and vowed repentance on the hand of the boy.

Juvenile Miscellany.

THE BOYS' HEAVEN.

HARRY and Frank had a hearty cry when an ill-natured neighbor poisoned their dog. They dug a grave for their favorite, but were unwilling to put him in it and cover him up with earth.

"I wish there was one of the Chinese petrifying streams near our house," said Frank. "We could lay Jip down in it; and, after a while, he would become a stone image, which we would always keep for a likeness of him."

Harry, who had been reading about the ancient Egyptians, remarked that it was a great pity the art of embalming was lost.

But Frank declared that a mummy was a hideous thing, and that he would rather have the dead dog out of his sight forever, than to make a mummy of him.

"It seems very hard never to see him again," said Harry, with a deep sigh.

"But perhaps Jip has gone to some dog-heaven; and when we go to the boys' heaven, we may happen to see our old pet on the way."

"If he should get sight of us he would follow us," said Frank. "He always liked us better than dogs. O yes, he would follow us to the boys' heaven, of that you may be sure; and I don't think boys would exactly like a heaven without any dogs. Mother, what kind of a place *is* a boys' heaven?"

His mother, who had just entered the room, knew nothing of what they had been talking about; and, the question being asked suddenly, she hardly knew what to answer.

She smiled, and said, "How can I tell, Frank? You know I never was there."

"That makes no difference," said he. "Folks tell about a great many things they never saw. Nobody ever goes to heaven till they die; but you often read to us about heaven and the angels. Perhaps some people, who died and went there, told others about it in their dreams."

"I cannot answer such questions, dear Harry," replied his mother. "I only know that God is very wise and good, and that he wills we should wait patiently and humbly till our souls grow old enough to understand such great mysteries. Just as it is necessary that you should wait to be much older before you can calculate when the moon will be eclipsed, or when certain stars will go away from our portion of the sky, and when they will come back again. Learned men know when the earth, in its travels through the air, will cast its long dark shadow over the brightness of the moon. They can foretell exactly the hour and the minute when a star will go down below the line which we call the horizon, where the earth and the sky seem to meet; and they know precisely when it will come up again. But if they tried ever so hard, they could never make little boys understand about the rising and the setting of the stars. The wisest of men are very small boys, compared with the angels; therefore the angels know perfectly well many things which they cannot possibly explain to a man till his soul grows and becomes an angel."

"I understand that," said Harry. "For I can read any book; but though Jip was a very bright dog, it was no manner of use to try to teach him the letters. He only winked and gaped when I told him that was A. You see, mother, I was the same as an angel to Jip."

His mother smiled to see how quickly he had caught her meaning.

After some more talk with them, she said, "You have both heard of Martin Luther, a great and good man who lived in Germany a long time ago. He was very loving to children; and once, when he was away from home, he wrote a letter to his little son. It was dated 1530; so you see it is more than three hundred years old. In those days they had not begun to print any books for children; therefore, I dare say, the boy was doubly delighted to have something in writing that his friends could read to him. You asked me, a few minutes ago, what sort of a place the boys' heaven is. In answer to your question, I will read what Martin Luther wrote to his son Hansigen, which in English means Little John. Any boy might be happy to receive such a letter. Listen to it now, and see if you don't think so.

"*To my little son, Hansigen Luther, grace and peace in Christ.*

"MY HEART-DEAR LITTLE SON: I hear that you learn well and pray diligently. Continue to do so, my son. When I come home I will bring you a fine present from the fair. I know of a lovely garden, full of joyful children, who wear little golden coats, and pick up beautiful apples, and pears, and cherries, and plums under the trees. They sing, and jump, and make merry. They have also beautiful little horses with golden saddles and silver bridles. I asked the man that kept the garden who the children were. And he said to me, 'The children are those who love to learn, and to pray, and to be good.' Then said I, 'Dear sir, I have a little son, named Hansigen Luther. May he come into this garden, and have the same beautiful apples and pears to eat, and wonderful little horses to ride upon, and may he play about with these children?' Then said he, 'If he is willing to learn, and to pray, and to be good, he shall come into this garden; and Lippus and Justus too. If they all come together, they shall have pipes, and little drums, and lutes, and music of stringed instruments. And they shall dance, and shoot with little crossbows.' Then he showed me a fine meadow in the garden, all laid out for dancing. There hung golden pipes and kettle-drums and fine silver crossbows; but it was too early to see the dancing, for the children had not had their dinner. I said, 'Ah, dear sir, I will instantly go and write to my little son Hansigen, so that he may study, and pray, and be good, and thus come into this garden. And he has a little cousin Lena, whom he must also bring with him.' Then he said to me, 'So shall it be. Go home, and write to him.'

"Therefore, dear little son Hansigen, be diligent to learn and to pray; and tell Lippus and Justus to do so too, that you may all meet together in that beautiful garden. Give cousin Lena a kiss from me. Herewith I recommend you all to the care of Almighty God."

The brothers both listened very attentively while that old letter was read; and when their mother had finished it, Frank exclaimed, "That must be a very beautiful place!"

Harry looked thoughtfully in the fire, and at last said, "I wonder who told all that to Martin Luther? Do you suppose an angel showed him that garden, when he was asleep?"

"I don't know," replied Frank. "But if there were small horses there with golden saddles for the boys, why should n't Jip be there, too, with a golden collar and bells?"

"Now, would n't that be grand!" exclaimed Harry. And away they both ran to plant flowers on Jip's grave.

L. Maria Child.

BESSIE'S GARDEN.

ABOVE all things, Bessie loved flowers, but wild flowers most. It seemed so wonderful to her that these frail things could find their way up out of the dark ground, and unfold their lovely blossoms, and all their little pointed leaves, without any one to teach or help them.

Who watched over the dear little wild flowers, all alone in the field, and on the hillside, and down by the brook? Ah, Bessie knew that her Heavenly Father watched over them; and she loved to think he was smiling down upon her at the same time that his strong, gentle hand took care of the flowers and of her at once. And she was not wrong, for Bessie was a kind of flower, you know.

One day the little girl thought how nice it would be to have a *wild* garden; to plant ever so many flowering things in one place, and let them run together in their pretty way, until the bright-eyed blossoms should gaze out from the whole tangled mass of beautiful green leaves.

So into the house she ran to find Aunt Annie, and ask her leave to wander over on a shady hillside where wild flowers grew thickest.

Yes, indeed, she might go, Aunt Annie said; but what had she to carry her roots and earth in while making the garden?

O, Bessie said, she could take a shingle, or her apron.

Aunt Annie laughed, and thought a basket would do better; they must find one. So they looked in the closets and attics, everywhere; but some of the baskets were full, and some were broken, and some had been gnawed by mice; not one could they find that was fit for Bessie's purpose.

Then dear Aunt Annie poured out the spools and bags from a nice large work-basket, and told Bessie she might have that for her own, to fill with earth or flowers, or anything she chose.

Pleased enough with her present, our young gardener went dancing along through the garden, — Aunt Annie watched her from the balcony, — dancing along, — and crept through a gap in the hedge, and out into the field, that was starred all over with dandelions, and down the hollow by the brook, and up on the hillside, out of sight among the shady trees.

And how she worked that afternoon, — singing all the while to herself as she worked! How she heaped together the rich, dark mould, and evened it over with her little hands! How she dug up roots of violets, and grass, and spring-beauty, and Dutchmen's breeches, travelling back and forth, back and forth, never tired, never ceasing her song.

The squirrels ran up out of their holes to look at Bessie; the birds alighted over her head and sang.

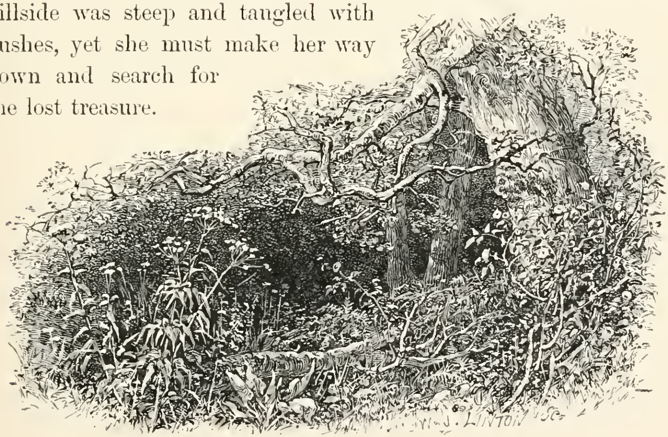
While Bessie was bending over her garden so earnestly, thump! came something all at once, something so cold and heavy! How quickly she jumped upon her feet, upsetting her basket, and making it roll down the hill, violet-roots and all!

And then how she laughed when she saw a big brown toad that had planted himself in the very centre of her garden, and stood there winking his silly eyes, and saying, "No offence, I hope!"

The squirrel chattered as if he were laughing too; the bird sang, "Never mind, Bessie, never mind; pick up your violets, and don't hurt the poor old toad!"

"O no; it 's God's toad; I should n't dare to hurt him," said Bessie.

Just at that moment she heard a bell ringing loudly from her father's house. She knew it was calling her home; but how could she leave her basket? She must look for that first; the hillside was steep and tangled with bushes, yet she must make her way down and search for the lost treasure.


W. J. LINTON Sc.

"Waiting, waiting, waiting!" suddenly sang the bird, from out of sight among the boughs; "waiting, Bessie," sang the bird.

"True enough," said Bessie; "perhaps I'm making my mother or dear Aunt Annie wait, — and they are so good! I'd better let the basket wait; take care of it, birdie! — and none of your trampling down my flowers, Mr. Toad!" And she climbed back again from bush to bush, and skipped along among the trunks of the great tall trees, and out by the brook through the meadow, hedge, garden, — up the steps, calling, "Mother, mother! Aunt Annie! who wants me?"

"I, dear," said her mother's voice; "I am going away for a long visit, and if you had not come at once, I could n't have bidden my little girl good by." So Bessie's mother kissed her, and told her to obey her kind aunt, and then asked what she would like brought home for a present.

"O, bring yourself, dear mother; come home all well and bright," said Bessie, "and I won't ask any more." For Bessie's mother had long been sick, and was going now for her health.

Her mother smiled and kissed her. "Yes, I will bring that if I can, but there must be something else; how would you like a set of tools for this famous garden?"

Bessie's eyes shone with joy. "What! a whole set, — rake, and hoe, and trowel, such as the gardener uses?"

"Exactly, only they'll be small enough for your little hands; and there'll be a shovel besides, and a wheelbarrow, and a water-pot."

So Bessie did not cry when her mother went away, though she loved her as well as any one possibly could. She thought of all the bright things, of the pleasant journey and the better health; and then, — then of her pretty set of tools, and the handsome garden they would make!

It was too late to go back to the hill that evening; and on the morrow Bessie awoke to find it raining fast. She went into her Aunt Annie's room with such a mournful face. "O aunty, this old rain!"

"This new, fresh, beautiful rain, Bessie; what are you thinking about? How it will make our flowers grow! and what a good time we can have together in the house!"

"I know it, Aunt Annie, but you 'll think me so careless!"

"To let it rain!"

"No, — don't laugh, aunty, — to leave your nice basket out-of-doors all night, and now to be soaked and spoiled in this — this — beautiful rain." Bessie's countenance did not look as though the beautiful rain made her very happy.

And good Aunt Annie, seeing how much she was troubled, only said, "You must be more careful, dear, another time; come and tell me all about it. Perhaps my Bessie has some good excuse; I can see it now in her eyes."

"Yes, indeed, I have," said Bessie, wiping away her tears. And the little girl crept close to her aunty's side, and told her of her beautiful time the day before, and of the bird, and squirrel, and toad; and how the basket rolled away down hill in the steepest place, and then how the bell rang, and she could n't wait to find it.

"And you did exactly right, dear," said Aunt Annie. "If you had lingered, your mother would have had to wait a whole day, or else go without seeing you. When I write, I shall tell her how obedient you were, and I know it will please her more than anything else I shall have to say."

Dear Aunt Annie, she had always a word of excuse and of comfort for every one! Bessie was too small to think much about it then. She only pressed her little cheek lovingly against her aunty's hand, and resolved that, when she grew up to a young lady, she would be just as kind and ready to forget herself as Aunt Annie was.

Ah, it was not Bessie's lot to grow up to a woman in this world! Before the ground was dry enough for her to venture out in search of her basket, she was seized with a fever, and in a few days shut up her sweet eyes, as the flowers shut their leaves together, and never opened them again.

Then the summer passed, and the grass grew green and faded, and snow-flakes began to fall on a little grave; and Aunt Annie quietly laid aside the set of garden tools that had come too late for Bessie's use, and only made her mother feel sad and lonely when she looked upon them now. And all this time, what had become of the basket?

As it fell from Bessie's hands that bright spring afternoon, it had lodged in a grassy hollow, that was all wound about, like a nest, with roots of the tall birch and maple trees; close among the roots grew patches of the lovely scented May-flower; and all the rest was long fine grass, with a tiny leaf or a violet growing here and there.

The roots in the basket dried away, and died for want of water; but the earth that Bessie had dug with them was full of little seeds, which had been hiding in the dark for years, awaiting their chance to grow.

Broader and darker grew the leaves on the shady boughs above, higher and higher grew the grass, and all but hid Bessie's basket. "Coming, coming, coming!" the bird sang in the boughs; but Bessie never came.

So the summer passed; and when autumn shook the broad leaves from the trees, and some went whirling down the hill, and some sailed away in the brook, some lodged in Bessie's basket; a few to-day, and a few the next day, till the snow came, and it was almost full to the brim.

Sometimes there would come a hoar-frost, and then it was full of sparkling flowers so airy that the first sunbeam melted them, but none the less lovely for that; and they melted, and went down among the leaves, and seed, and sand, and violet-roots.

In spring the May-flowers perfumed the hollow with their sweet, fresh breath; but no one gathered them. The leaves and the grass nestled close to Bessie's basket, as if they remembered her; and drops of rain dripped into it from the budding boughs, and sparkled as they dropped, though they were full of tiny grains of dust and seed; and thus another summer passed, and no one knew what had become of Bessie's basket.

The bird sang, "Coming, coming!" but she never came.

So the third spring came round; and Aunt Annie was putting her closet in order one day, rolling up pieces, and clearing boxes, and smoothing drawers, when she came upon a little bundle. It was the bags, and work, and spools of thread — all old and yellow now — which she had poured out that morning in spring, in order to give the basket to her little niece.

"Dear child!" said Aunt Annie, "why have I never looked for the lost basket? The poor little garden must be swept away, but it would be pleasant to go where her sweet footsteps trod on that happy afternoon."

So she went, all by herself, in the same direction which she had watched Bessie take; and it seemed as if the little one were skipping before her through the garden, the gate, — the gap in the hedge was not large enough for Aunt Annie, — across the meadow that shone again with starry dandelions, along by the brook, and up the hill, till she was lost from sight among the trees.

How sweet and fresh it was in the lonely wood, with the birds, and the young leaves, and starry wild flowers, and patches of pretty moss! Did Bessie wait here and rest? Did she climb this rock for columbines? Did she creep to the edge of this bank, and look over?

So Aunt Annie seated herself to rest among the moss and roots and leaves; she picked columbines, climbing by help of the slender birch-trees; she went to the edge of the bank, and looked down past all the trees, and stones, and flowers, to the little brook below. And what do you think she saw?

What do you think made the tears come in Aunt Annie's eyes so quickly, though she seemed so glad they must have been tears of joy?

After a while Aunt Annie turned to go home. Why did she put the boughs aside so gently, and step so carefully over the soft moss, as if she feared making any sound. Can you think?

She found Bessie's mother seated at work with a sad face, and her back turned towards the window.

"O," said Aunt Annie, "how dark the room is, with all these heavy curtains! and how still and lonesome it seems here! You must come this moment and take a walk with me out in the sunshine; it will do you good."

Bessie's mother shook her head. "I don't care for sunshine to-day; I would rather be lonely."

Then Aunt Annie knelt by her sister, and looked up with those sweet eyes none could ever refuse. "Not care for sun, because our dear little Bessie has gone to be an angel! O, you must see the field all over buttercups and dandelions, like a sky turned upside down, — it would have pleased her so! and you must see the brook and woods; and then I have such a surprise for you, you'll never be sorry for laying aside your work."

"Is it anything about Bessie?" the mother asked, as they went down the steps, out into the bright, beautiful sunshine.

"Yes, yes! Everything makes you think of her to-day; I can almost see her little footsteps in the grass. A bird somewhere in the wood sung her very name, — and so sweetly, as if he loved her, — 'Bessie, Bessie, Bessie,' as if he were thinking of her all the while!"

They reached the wood soon, for Aunt Annie seemed in haste, and hurried Bessie's mother on; though she had grown so happy all at once, that she wanted to wait and look at everything, — the little leaves in the ground, and the grass-blades, and clover, and bees even, seemed to please her.

When you find people sad, there is nothing in all the world so good as to take them out in the sun of a summer day. You must remember this; it is better than most of the Latin prescriptions doctors write.

When they were fairly within the wood, at the brow of the steep bank, Aunt Annie parted the branches with both her hands, and said, "You must follow me down a little way; come."

O, as Aunt Annie looked back, it seemed as if she had brought all the sunshine in her dear face! "Don't think of being afraid," she said; "why, Bessie came down here once! I have found her basket, I've found her beautiful garden!"

Yes, that was the secret! You remember the spot into which

Bessie's basket fell; all intertwined like a bird's-nest with roots of the great tall trees; all green and soft with the fine grass that grows in the woods. Here it had lain ever since. Here it was.—

But you cannot think how changed! The violet-roots, the leaves, dust, rain, frost, seed, — you remember how they filled it, and withered to leave room for more, day by day, week by week.

Now these had mingled together, and made rich earth; and the seeds had grown, the tiny seeds, and were dear little plants and flowers, that hung about the edge, and crept through the open-work sides, with their delicate green leaves, and tendrils, and starry blossoms!

Violet, chickweed, anemone, spring-beauty, and dicentra, that children call "Dutchman's breeches," with its pearly, drooping flowers, — these had tangled into one lovely mass of leaves and blossoms, just such as would have made our Bessie sing for joy.

Yet you have not heard the best; Aunt Annie's footsteps on the moss would not have disturbed these. Right in the midst of the flowers in Bessie's basket a little gray ground-sparrow had built her nest of hair and moss, and there she was hatching her eggs! As they drew nearer, the little bird looked up at the ladies with his bright brown eye, and seemed to say, "Don't hurt me; don't, for Bessie's sake!"

No, they would not hurt Bessie's bird for the whole wide world. They went quietly home, and left him there watching for his mate, who had flown up towards the sky to stretch her wings a little.

Slowly, hand in hand, the sisters passed once more through the wood. They could not bear to leave so sweet a place. And all the while Bessie's bird sang to them his strange song, "Coming, coming, coming!" They heard it till the wood was out of sight.

"Yes, there are always good things coming as well as going," Aunt Annie said, softly, "if we are patient and wait. The dear child's basket has grown more useful and lovely because she lost it that bright day."

"And our lost darling?" Bessie's mother began to ask, and looked in Aunt Annie's eyes.

"Our Bessie's flowers do not fade now; there is no cold winter in heaven; she cannot lose her treasures there. And has n't she grown more useful and lovely, living among the angels all this while?"

Then, from afar in the woods, they heard the low, sweet voice, that thrilled forth, "Coming, coming!" and Bessie's mother smiled, and said, "She cannot come to us, but we soon shall go to her; and O, our darling's hand in ours, how gladly shall we walk in the Eternal Garden!"

Caroline S. Whitmarsh.

HOW THE CRICKETS BROUGHT GOOD FORTUNE.

MY friend Jacques went into a baker's shop one day to buy a little cake which he had fancied in passing. He intended it for a child whose appetite was gone, and who could be coaxed to eat only by amusing him. He thought that such a pretty loaf might tempt even the sick. While he waited for his change, a little boy six or eight years old, in poor, but perfectly clean clothes, entered the baker's shop. "Ma'am," said he to the baker's wife, "mother sent me for a loaf of bread." The woman climbed upon the counter (this happened in a country town), took from the shelf of four-pound loaves the best one she could find, and put it into the arms of the little boy.

My friend Jacques then first observed the thin and thoughtful face of the little fellow. It contrasted strongly with the round, open countenance of the great loaf, of which he was taking the greatest care.

"Have you any money?" said the baker's wife.

The little boy's eyes grew sad.

"No, ma'am," said he, hugging the loaf closer to his thin blouse; "but mother told me to say that she would come and speak to you about it to-morrow."

"Run along," said the good woman; "carry your bread home, child."

"Thank you, ma'am," said the poor little fellow.

My friend Jacques came forward for his money. He had put his purchase into his pocket, and was about to go, when he found the child with the big loaf, whom he had supposed to be half-way home, standing stock-still behind him.

"What are you doing there?" said the baker's wife to the child, whom she also had thought to be fairly off. "Don't you like the bread?"

10506

New York Public Library
—*—
MELROSE BRANCH
910 MORRIS AVENUE
CIRCU MENT
—*—

"O yes, ma'am!" said the child.

"Well, then, carry it to your mother, my little friend. If you wait any longer, she will think you are playing by the way, and you will get a scolding."

The child did not seem to hear. Something else absorbed his attention.

The baker's wife went up to him, and gave him a friendly tap on the shoulder. "What *are* you thinking about?" said she.

"Ma'am," said the little boy, "what is it that sings?"

"There is no singing," said she.

"Yes!" cried the little fellow. "Hear it! Queek, queek, queek, queek!"

My friend and the woman both listened, but they could hear nothing, unless it was the song of the crickets, frequent guests in bakers' houses.

"It is a little bird," said the dear little fellow; "or perhaps the bread sings when it bakes, as apples do."

"No, indeed, little goosey!" said the baker's wife;. "those are crickets. They sing in the bakehouse because we are lighting the oven, and they like to see the fire."

"Crickets!" said the child; "are they really crickets?"

"Yes, to be sure," said she, good-humoredly. The child's face lighted up.

"Ma'am," said he, blushing at the boldness of his request, "I would like it very much if you would give me a cricket."

"A cricket!" said the baker's wife, smiling; "what in the world would you do with a cricket, my little friend? I would gladly give you all there are in the house, to get rid of them, they run about so."

"O ma'am, give me one, only one, if you please!" said the child, clasping his little thin hands under the big loaf. "They say that crickets bring good luck into houses; and perhaps if we had one at home, mother, who has so much trouble, would n't cry any more."

"Why does your poor mamma cry?" said my friend, who could no longer help joining in the conversation.

"On account of her bills, sir," said the little fellow. "Father 's dead, and mother works very hard, but she cannot pay them all."

My friend took the child, and with him the great loaf, into his arms, and I really believe he kissed them both. Meanwhile the baker's wife, who did not dare to touch a cricket herself, had gone into the bakehouse. She made her husband catch four, and put them into a box with holes in the cover, so that they might breathe. She gave the box to the child, who went away perfectly happy.

When he had gone, the baker's wife and my friend gave each other a good squeeze of the hand. "Poor little fellow!" said they both together. Then she took down her account-book, and, finding the page where the mother's charges were written, made a great dash all down the page, and then wrote at the bottom, "Paid."

Meanwhile my friend, to lose no time, had put up in paper all the money in his pockets, where fortunately he had quite a sum that day, and had begged the good wife to send it at once to the mother of the little cricket-boy, with her bill receipted, and a note, in which he told her she had a son who would one day be her joy and pride.

They gave it to a baker's boy with long legs, and told him to make haste. The child, with his big loaf, his four crickets, and his little short legs, could not run very fast, so that, when he reached home, he found his mother, for the first time in many weeks with her eyes raised from her work, and a smile of peace and happiness upon her lips.

The boy believed that it was the arrival of his four little black things which had worked this miracle, and I do not think he was mistaken. Without the crickets, and his good little heart, would this happy change have taken place in his mother's fortunes!

From the French of P. J. Stahl.

PAUL AND VIRGINIA.

ON the eastern coast of the mountain which rises above Port Louis in the Mauritius, upon a piece of land bearing the marks of former cultivation, are seen the ruins of two small cottages. Those ruins are situated near the centre of a valley, formed by immense rocks, and which opens only toward the north. On the left rises the mountain, called the Height of Discovery, whence the eye marks the distant sail when it first touches the verge of the horizon, and whence the signal is given when a vessel approaches the island. At the foot of this mountain stands the town of Port Louis. On the right is formed the road, which stretches from Port Louis to the Shaddock Grove, where the church bearing that name lifts its head, surrounded by its avenues of bamboo, in the midst of a spacious plain; and the prospect terminates in a forest extending to the farthest bounds of the island. The front view presents the bay, denominated the Bay of the Tomb; a little on the right is seen the Cape of Misfortune;

and beyond rolls the expanded ocean, on the surface of which appear a few uninhabited islands, and, among others, the Point of Endeavor, which resembles a bastion built upon the flood.

At the entrance of the valley which presents those various objects, the echoes of the mountain incessantly repeat the hollow murmurs of the winds that shake the neighboring forests, and the tumultuous dashing of the waves which break at a distance upon the cliffs; but near the ruined cottages all is calm and still, and the only objects which there meet the eye are rude steep rocks, that rise like a surrounding rampart. Large clumps of trees grow at their base, on their rifted sides, and even on their majestic tops, where the clouds seem to repose. The showers, which their bold points attract, often paint the vivid colors of the rainbow on their green and brown declivities, and swell the sources of the little river which flows at their feet, called the river of Fan-Palms.

Within this enclosure reigns the most profound silence. The waters, the air, all the elements, are at peace. Scarcely does the echo repeat the whispers of the palm-trees spreading their broad leaves, the long points of which are gently agitated by the winds. A soft light illumines the bottom of this deep valley, on which the sun shines only at noon. But even at break of day the rays of light are thrown on the surrounding rocks; and their sharp peaks, rising above the shadows of the mountain, appear like tints of gold and purple gleaming upon the azure sky.

Here two mothers, widowed by death and desertion, nursed their children, with the sight of whom the mutual affection of the parents acquired new strength.

Madame de la Tour's child was named Virginia; her friend Margaret's, Paul. They loved to put their infants into the same bath, and lay them in the same cradle; and sometimes each nursed at her bosom the other's babe.

"My friend," said Madame de la Tour, "we shall each of us have two children, and each of our children will have two mothers."

Nothing could exceed the attachment which these infants early displayed for each other. If Paul complained, his mother pointed to Virginia, and at that sight he smiled and was appeased. If any accident befell Virginia, the cries of Paul gave notice of the disaster, and then the dear child would suppress her complaints when she found that Paul was unhappy. When I came hither, I used to see them tottering along, holding each other by the hands and under the arms, as we represent the constellation of the Twins. At night these infants often refused to be separated, and were found lying in the same cradle, their cheeks, their bosoms, pressed close together, their hands thrown round each other's neck, and sleeping locked in one another's arms.

When they began to speak, the first names they learned to give each other were those of brother and sister, and childhood knows no softer appellation. Their education served to increase their early friendship, by directing it to the supply of each other's wants. In a short time, all that regarded the household economy, the care of preparing the rural repasts, became the task of Virginia, whose labors were always crowned with the praises and kisses of her brother. As for Paul, always in motion, he dug the garden with Domingo, or followed him with a little hatchet into the woods; and if in his rambles he espied a beautiful flower, fine fruit, or a nest of birds, even at the top of a tree, he would climb up, and bring it home to his sister.

When you met one of these children, you might be sure the other was not far off. One day, as I was coming down the mountain, I saw Virginia at the end of the garden, running toward the house, with her petticoat thrown over her head, in order to screen herself from a shower of rain. At a distance, I thought she was alone; but as I hastened toward her, in order to help her on, I perceived that she held Paul by the arm, almost entirely enveloped in the same canopy, and both were laughing heartily at being sheltered together under an umbrella of their own invention. Those two charming faces placed within the swelling petticoat recalled to my mind the children of Leda enclosed within the same shell.

Their sole study was how to please and assist each other; for of all other things they were ignorant, and knew neither how to read nor write. They were never disturbed by inquiries about past times, nor did their curiosity extend beyond the bounds of their mountain. They believed the world ended at the shores of their own island, and all their ideas and affections were confined within its limits. Their mutual tenderness, and that of their mothers, employed all the activity of their souls. Their tears had

never been called forth by tedious application to useless sciences. Their minds had never been wearied by lessons of morality, superfluous to bosoms unconscious of ill. They had never been taught not to steal, because everything with them was in common; or not to be intemperate, because their simple food was left to their own discretion; or not to lie, because they had no truth to conceal. Their young imaginations had never been terrified by the idea that God has punishments in store for ungrateful children, since with them filial affection arose naturally from maternal fondness.

Thus passed their early childhood, like a beautiful dawn, the prelude of a bright day. Already they partook with their mothers the cares of the household. As soon as the crow of the cock announced the first beam of the morning, Virginia arose, and hastened to draw water from a neighboring spring; then, returning to the house, she prepared the breakfast. When the rising sun lighted up the points of the rocks which overhang this enclosure, Margaret and her child went to the dwelling of Madame de la Tour, and offered up together their morning prayer. This sacrifice of thanksgiving always preceded their first repast, of which they often partook before the door of the cottage, seated upon the grass, under a canopy of plantain; and while the branches of that delightful tree afforded a grateful shade, its solid fruit furnished food ready prepared by Nature; and its long glossy leaves, spread upon the table, supplied the want of linen.

Perhaps the most charming spot of this enclosure was that which was called Virginia's Resting-place. At the foot of the rock which bore the name of the Discovery of Friendship is a nook, from whence issues a fountain, forming, near its source, a little spot of marshy soil in the midst of a field of rich grass. At the time Margaret brought Paul into the world, I made her a present of an Indian cocoa which had been given me, and which she planted on the border of this fenny ground, in order that the tree might one day serve to mark the epoch of her son's birth. Madame de la Tour planted another cocoa, with the same view, at the birth of Virginia. These nuts produced two cocoa-trees, which formed the only records of the two families: one was called Paul's tree; the other, Virginia's tree. They both grew in the same proportion as their two owners, a little unequally; but they rose, at the end of twelve years, above the cottages. Already their tender stalks were interwoven, and their young clusters of cocoas hung over the basin of the fountain. Except this little plantation, the nook of the rock had been left as it was decorated by Nature. On its brown and moist sides large plants of maidenhair glistened with their green and dark stars; and tufts of wave-leaved hart's-tongue, suspended like long ribbons of purpled green, floated on the winds. Near this grew a chain of the Madagascar periwinkle, the flowers of which resemble the red gillyflower; and the long-podded capsicum, the seed-vessels of which are of the color of blood, and more glowing than coral. Hard by, the herb of balm, with its leaves within the heart, and the sweet basil, which has the odor of the gillyflower, exhaled the most delicious perfumes. From the steep side of the mountain hung the graceful lianas, like floating drapery, forming magnificent canopies of verdure upon the sides of the rocks. The sea-birds, allured by the stillness of those retreats, resorted thither to pass the night. At the hour of sunset we could see the curlew and the stint skimming along the sea-shore; the black frigate-bird poised high in air; and the white bird of the tropic, which abandons, with the star of day, the solitudes of the Indian Ocean. Virginia loved to rest upon the border of this fountain, decorated with wild and sublime magnificence. She often seated herself beneath the shade of the two cocoa-trees, and there she sometimes led her goats to graze. While she was making cheeses of their milk, she loved to see them browse on the maidenhair which grew upon the steep sides of the rock, and hung suspended upon one of its cornices, as on a pedestal. Paul, observing that Virginia was fond of this spot, brought thither, from the neighboring forest, a great variety of bird's-nests. The old birds, following their young, established themselves in this new colony. Virginia, at certain times, distributed among them grains of rice, millet, and maize. As soon as she appeared, the whistling blackbird, the amadavid bird, the note of which is so soft, the cardinal, with its plumage the color of flame, forsook their bushes; the paroquet, green as an emerald, descended from the neighboring fan-palms; the partridge ran along the grass; all came running helter-skelter toward her, like a brood of chickens, and she and Paul delighted to observe their sports, their repasts, and their loves.

Amiable children! thus passed your early days in innocence, and in the exercise of benevolence. How many times, on this very spot, have your mothers, pressing you in their arms, blessed Heaven for the consolations that you were preparing for their declining years, and that they could see you begin life under such happy auspices! How many times, beneath the shade of those rocks, have I partaken with them of your rural repasts, which cost no animal its life! Gourds filled with milk, fresh eggs, cakes of rice placed upon plantain leaves, baskets loaded with mangoes, oranges, dates, pomegranates, pine-apples, furnished at once the most wholesome food, the most beautiful colors, and the most delicious juices.

The conversation was gentle and innocent as the repasts. Paul often talked of the labors of the day and those of the morrow. He was continually planning something useful for their little society. Here he discovered that the paths were rough; there that the seats were uncomfortable; sometimes the young arbors did not afford sufficient shade, and Virginia might be better pleased elsewhere.

In the rainy season the two families met together in the cottage, and employed themselves in weaving mats of grass and baskets of bamboo. Rakes, spades, and hatchets were ranged along the walls in the most perfect order; and near these instruments of agriculture were placed its products, — sacks of rice, sheaves of corn, and baskets of plantains. Some degree of luxury is usually united with plenty, and Virginia was taught by her mother and Margaret to prepare sherbet and cordials from the juice of the sugar-cane, the lemon, and the citron.

When night came, they all supped together by the light of a lamp; after which Madame de la Tour or Margaret told stories of travellers lost during the night in forests of Europe infested by banditti; or of some shipwrecked vessel, thrown by the tempest upon the rocks of a desert island. To these recitals their children listened with eager sensibility, and earnestly begged that Heaven would grant they might one day have the joy of showing their hospitality towards such unfortunate persons. At length the two families would separate and retire to rest, impatient to meet again the next morning. Sometimes they were lulled to repose by the beating rains which fell in torrents upon the roofs of their cottages, and sometimes by the hollow winds, which brought to their ear the distant murmur of the waves breaking upon the shore. They blessed God for their own safety, of which their feeling became stronger from the idea of remote danger.

Bernardin de Saint Pierre.

OEYVIND AND MARIT.

OEYVIND was his name. A low barren cliff overhung the house in which he was born; fir and birch looked down on the roof, and wild-cherry strewed flowers over it. Upon this roof there walked about a little goat, which belonged to Oeyvind. He was kept there that he might not go astray; and Oeyvind carried carried leaves and grass up to him. One fine day the goat leaped down, and — away to the cliff; he went straight up, and came where he never had been before. Oeyvind did not see him when he came out after dinner, and thought immediately of the fox. He grew hot all over, looked around about, and called, "Killy-killy-killy-goat!"

"Bay-ay-ay," said the goat, from the brow of the hill, as he cocked his head on one side and looked down.

But at the side of the goat there kneeled a little girl.

"Is it yours, this goat?" she asked.

Oeyvind stood with eyes and mouth wide open, thrust both hands into the breeches he had on, and asked, "Who are you?"

"I am Marit, mother's little one, father's fiddle, the elf in the house, grand-daughter of Ole Nordistuen of the Heide farms, four years old in the autumn, two days after the frost nights, I!"

"Are you really?" he said, and drew a long breath, which he had not dared to do so long as she was speaking.

"Is it yours, this goat?" asked the girl again.

"Ye-es," he said, and looked up.

"I have taken such a fancy to the goat. You will not give it to me?"

"No, that I won't."

She lay kicking her legs, and looking down at him, and then she said, "But if I give you a butter-cake for the goat, can I have him then?"

Oeyvind came of poor people, and had eaten butter-cake only once in his life, that was when grandpapa came there, and anything like it he had never eaten before nor since. He looked up at the girl. "Let me see the butter-cake first," said he.

She was not long about it, took out a large cake, which she held in her hand. "Here it is," she said, and threw it down.

"Ow, it went to pieces," said the boy. He gathered up every bit with the utmost care; he could not help tasting the very smallest, and that was so good, he had to taste another, and, before he knew it himself, he had eaten up the whole cake.

"Now the goat is mine," said the girl. The boy stopped with the last bit in his mouth, the girl lay and laughed, and the goat stood by her side, with white breast and dark brown hair, looking sideways down.

"Could you not wait a little while?" begged the boy; his heart began to beat. Then the girl laughed still more, and got up quickly on her knees.

"No, the goat is mine," she said, and threw her arms round its neck, loosened one of her garters, and fastened it round. Oeyvind looked up. She got up, and began pulling at the goat; it would not follow, and twisted its neck downwards to where Oeyvind stood. "Bay-ay-ay," it said. But she took hold of its hair with one hand, pulled the string with the other, and said gently, "Come, goat, and you shall go into the room and eat out of mother's dish and my apron." And then she sung, —

"Come, boy's goat,
Come, mother's calf,
Come, mewing cat
In snow-white shoes.
Come, yellow ducks,
Come out of your hiding-place;
Come, little chickens,
Who can hardly go;
Come, my doves
With soft feathers;
See, the grass is wet,
But the sun does you good;
And early, early is it in summer,
But call for the autumn, and it will come."

There stood the boy.

He had taken care of the goat since the winter before, when it was born, and he had never imagined he could lose it; but now it was done in a moment, and he should never see it again.

His mother came up humming from the beach, with wooden pans which she had scoured: she saw the boy sitting with his legs crossed under him on the grass, crying, and she went up to him.

"What are you crying about?"

"O, the goat, the goat!"

"Yes; where is the goat?" asked his mother, looking up at the roof.

"It will never come back again," said the boy.

"Dear me! how could that happen?"

He would not confess immediately.

"Has the fox taken it?"

"Ah, if it only were the fox!"

"Are you crazy?" said his mother; "what has become of the goat?"

"Oh-h-h — I happened to — to — to sell it for a cake!"

As soon as he had uttered the word, he understood what it was to sell the goat for a cake; he had not thought of it before. His mother said, —

"What do you suppose the little goat thinks of you, when you could sell him for a cake?"

And the boy thought about it, and felt sure that he could never again be happy in this world, and not even in heaven, he thought afterwards. He felt so sorry, that he promised himself never again to do anything wrong, never to cut the thread on the spinning-wheel, nor let the goats out, nor go down to the sea alone. He fell asleep where he lay, and dreamed about the goat, that it had gone to Heaven; our Lord sat there with a great beard as in the catechism, and the goat stood eating the leaves off a shining tree; but Oeyvind sat alone on the roof, and could not come up.

Suddenly there came something wet close up to his ear, and he started up. "Bay-ay-ay!" it said; and it was the goat, who had come back again.

"What! have you got back?" He jumped up, took it by the two fore-legs, and danced with it as if it were a brother; he pulled its beard, and he was just going in to his mother with it, when he heard some one behind him, and, looking, saw the girl sitting on the greensward by his side. Now he understood it all, and let go the goat.

"Is it you, who have come with it?"

She sat, tearing the grass up with her hands, and said, —

"They would not let me keep it; grandfather is sitting up there, waiting."

While the boy stood looking at her, he heard a sharp voice from the road above call out, "Now!"

Then she remembered what she was to do; she rose, went over to Oeyvind, put one of her muddy hands into his, and, turning her face away, said, —

"I beg your pardon!"

But then her courage was all gone; she threw herself over the goat, and wept.

"I think you had better keep the goat," said Oeyvind, looking the other way.

"Come, make haste!" said grandpapa, up on the hill; and Marit rose, and walked with reluctant feet upwards.

"You are forgetting your garter," Oeyvind called after her. She turned round, and looked first at the garter and then at him. At last she came to a great resolution, and said, in a choked voice, —

"You may keep that."

He went over to her, and, taking her hand, said, —

"Thank you!"

"O, nothing to thank for!" she answered, but drew a long sigh, and walked on.

He sat down on the grass again. The goat walked about near him, but he was no longer so pleased with it as before.

The goat was fastened to the wall; but Oeyvind walked about, looking up at the cliff. His mother came out, and sat down by his side; he wanted to hear stories about what was far away, for now the goat no longer satisfied him. So she told him how once every thing could talk: the mountain talked to the stream, and the stream to the river, the river to the sea, and the sea to the sky; but then he asked if the sky did not talk to any one; and the sky talked to the clouds, the clouds to the trees, the trees to the grass, the grass to the flies, the flies to the animals, the animals to the children, the children to the grown-up people; and so it went on, until it had gone round, and no one could tell where it had begun. Oeyvind looked at the mountain, the trees. the sky, and had never really seen them before. The cat came out at that moment, and lay down on the stone before the door in the sunshine.

"What does the cat say?" asked Oeyvind, pointing. His mother sang, —

"At evening softly shines the sun,
The cat lies lazy on the stone.
Two small mice,
Cream thick and nice,
Four bits of fish,
I stole behind a dish,
And am so lazy and tired,
Because so well I have fared,"

says the cat.

But then came the cock, with all the hens. "What does the cock say?" asked Oeyvind, clapping his hands together. His mother sang, —

"The mother-hen her wings doth sink,
The cock stands on one leg to think:
That gray goose
Steers high her course;
But sure am I that never she
As clever as a cock can be.
Run in, you hens, keep under the roof to-day,
For the sun has got leave to stay away,"

says the cock.

But the little birds were sitting on the ridge-pole, singing. "What do the birds say?" asked Oeyvind, laughing.

"Dear Lord, how pleasant is life,
For those who have neither toil nor strife,"

say the birds.

And she told him what they all said, down to the ant, who crawled in the moss, and the worm who worked in the bark.

That same summer, his mother began to teach him to read. He had owned books a long time, and often wondered how it would seem when they also began to talk. Now the letters turned into animals, birds, and everything else; but soon they began to walk together, two and two; *a* stood and rested under a tree, which was called *b*; then came *e*, and did the same; but when three or four came together, it seemed as if they were angry with each other, for it would not go right. And the farther along he came, the more he forgot what they were: he remembered longest *a*, which he liked best; it was a little black lamb, and was friends with everybody; but soon he forgot *a* also: the book had no more stories, nothing but lessons.

One day his mother came in, and said to him, —

"To-morrow school begins, and then you are going up to the farm with me."

Oeyvind had heard that school was a place where many boys played together; and he had no objection. Indeed, he was much pleased. He had often been at the farm, but never when there was school there; and now he was so anxious to get there, he walked faster than his mother up over the hills. As they came up to the neighboring house, a tremendous buzzing, like that from the water-mill at home, met their ears; and he asked his mother what it was.

"That is the children reading," she answered; and he was much pleased, for that was the way he used to read, before he knew the letters. When he came in, there sat as many children round a table as he had ever seen at church; others were sitting on their luncheon-boxes, which were ranged round the walls; some stood in small groups round a large printed card; the schoolmaster, an old gray-haired man, was sitting on a stool by the chimney-corner, filling his pipe. They all looked up as Oeyvind and his mother entered, and the mill-hum ceased as if the water had suddenly been turned off. All looked at the new-comers; the mother bowed to the schoolmaster, who returned her greeting.

"Here I bring a little boy who wants to learn to read," said his mother.

"What is the fellow's name?" said the schoolmaster, diving down into his pouch after tobacco.

"Oeyvind," said his mother; "he knows his letters, and can put them together."

"Is it possible!" said the schoolmaster: "come here, you Whitehead!"

Oeyvind went over to him: the schoolmaster took him on his lap, and raised his cap.

"What a nice little boy!" said he, and stroked his hair. Oeyvind looked up into his eyes, and laughed.

"Is it at me you are laughing?" asked he, with a frown.

"Yes, it is," answered Oeyvind, and roared with laughter. At that the schoolmaster laughed, Oeyvind's mother laughed; the children understood that they also were allowed to laugh, and so they all laughed together.

So Oeyvind became one of the scholars.

As he was going to find his seat, they all wanted to make room for him. He looked round a long time, while they whispered and pointed; he turned round on all sides, with his cap in his hand and his book under his arm.

"Now, what are you going to do?" asked the schoolmaster, who was busy with his pipe again. Just as the boy is going to turn round to the schoolmaster, he sees close beside him, sitting down by the hearthstone on a little red painted tub, Marit, of the many names; she had covered her face with both hands, and sat peeping at him through her fingers.

"I shall sit here," said Oeyvind, quickly, taking a tub and seating himself at her side. Then she raised a little the arm nearest him, and looked at him from under her elbow; immediately he also hid his face with both hands, and looked at her from under his elbow. So they sat, keeping up the sport, until she laughed, then he laughed too; the children had seen it, and laughed with them; at that, there rung out in a fearfully strong voice, which, however, grew milder at every pause, —

"Silence! you young scoundrels, you rascals, you little good-for-nothings! keep still, and be good to me, you sugar-pigs."

That was the schoolmaster, whose custom it was to boil up, but calm down again before he had finished. It grew quiet immediately in the school, until the water-wheels again began to go; every one read aloud from his book, the sharpest trebles piped up, the rougher voices drummed louder and louder to get the preponderance; here and there one shouted in above the others, and Oeyvind had never had such fun in all his life.

"Is it always like this here?" whispered he to Marit.

"Yes, just like this," she said.

Afterwards, they had to go up to the schoolmaster, and read; and then a little boy was called to read, so that they were allowed to go and sit down quietly again.

"I have got a goat now, too," said she.

"Have you?"

"Yes; but it is not so pretty as yours."

"Why don't you come oftener up on the cliff?"

"Grandpapa is afraid I shall fall over."

"But it is not so very high."

"Grandpapa won't let me, for all that."

"Mother knows so many songs," said he.

"Grandpapa does, too, you can believe."

"Yes; but he does not know what mother does."

"Grandpapa knows one about a dance. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, very much."

"Well, then, you must come farther over here, so that the schoolmaster may not hear."

He changed his place, and then she recited a little piece of a song three or four times over, so that the boy learned it, and that was the first he learned at school.

"Up with you, youngsters!" called out the schoolmaster. "This is the first day, so you shall be dismissed early; but first we must say a prayer, and sing."

Instantly, all was life in the school; they jumped down from the benches, sprung over the floor, and talked into each other's mouths.

"Silence! you young torments, you little beggars, you noisy boys! be quiet, and walk softly across the floor, little children," said the schoolmaster; and now they walked quietly, and took their places; after which the schoolmaster went in front of them, and made a short prayer. Then they sung. The schoolmaster began in a deep bass; all the children stood with folded hands, and joined in. Oeyvind stood farthest down by the door with Marit, and looked on; they also folded their hands, but they could not sing.

That was the first day at school.

"*The Happy Boy.*"

BOOTS AT THE HOLLY-TREE INN.

BEFORE the days of railways, and in the time of the old Great North Road, I was once snowed up at the Holly-Tree Inn. Beguiling the days of my imprisonment there by talking at one time or other with the whole establishment, I one day talked with the Boots, when he lingered in my room.

Where had he been in his time? Boots repeated, when I asked him the question. Lord, he had been everywhere! And what had he been? Bless you, everything you could mention, a'most.

Seen a good deal? Why, of course he had. I should say so, he could assure me, if I only knew about a twentieth part of what had come in *his* way. Why, it would be easier for him, he expected, to tell what he had n't seen than what he had. Ah! a deal it would.

What was the curiousest thing he had seen? Well! He did n't know. He could n't momently name what was the curiousest thing he had seen, — unless it was a Unicorn, — and he see *him* once at a Fair. But supposing a young gentleman not eight year old was to run away with a fine young woman of seven, might I think *that* a queer start? Certainly! Then that was a start as he himself had had his blessed eyes on, — and he had cleaned the shoes they run away in, — and they was so little that he could n't get his hand into 'em.

Master Harry Walmers's father, you see, he lived at the Elmses, down away by Shooter's Hill there, six or seven miles from Lunnon. He was a gentleman of spirit, and good-looking, and held his head up when he walked, and had what you may call Fire about him. He wrote poetry, and he rode, and he ran, and he cricketed, and he danced, and he acted, and he done it all equally beautiful. He was uncommon proud of Master Harry as was his only child; but he did n't spoil him, neither. He was a gentleman that had a will of his own, and a eye of his own, and that would be minded. Consequently, though he made quite a companion of the fine bright boy, and was delighted to see him so fond of reading his fairy books, and was never tired of hearing him say my name is Norval, or hearing him sing his songs about Young May Moons is beaming love, and When he as adores thee has left but the name, and that, — still he kept the command over the child, and the child *was* a child, and it 's wery much to be wished more of 'em was!

How did Boots happen to know all this? Why, sir, through being under-gardener. Of course I could n't be under-gardener, and be always about, in the summer time, near the windows on the lawn, a mowing and sweeping, and weeding and pruning, and this and that, without getting acquainted with the ways of the family. Even supposing Master Harry had n't come to me one morning early, and said, "Cobbs, how should you spell Norah, if you was asked?" and when I give him my views, sir, respectin' the spelling o' that name, he took out his little knife, and he begun a cutting it in print, all over the fence.

And the courage of the boy! Bless your soul, he 'd have throwed off his little hat, and tucked up his little sleeves, and gone in at a Lion, he would. One day he stops, along with her (where I was hoeing weeds in the gravel), and says, speaking up, "Cobbs," he says, "I like *you*." "Do you, sir? I 'm proud to hear it." "Yes, I do, Cobbs. Why do I like you, do you think, Cobbs?" "Don't know, Master Harry, I am sure." "Because Norah likes you, Cobbs." "Indeed, sir? That 's very gratifying." "Gratifying, Cobbs? It 's better than millions of the brightest diamonds, to be liked by Norah." "Certainly, sir." "You 're going away, ain't you, Cobbs?" "Yes, sir." "Would you like another situation, Cobbs?" "Well, sir, I should n't object, if it was a good 'un." "Then, Cobbs," says that mite, "you shall be our Head Gardener when we are married." And he tucks her, in her little sky-blue mantle, under his arm, and walks away.

Boots could assure me that it was better than a picter, and equal to a play, to see them babies with their long bright curling hair, their sparkling eyes, and their beautiful light tread, rambling about the garden, deep in love. Boots was of opinion that the birds believed they was birds, and kept up with 'em, singing to please 'em. Sometimes they would creep under the Tulip-tree, and would sit there with their arms round one another's necks, and their soft cheeks touching, a reading about the Prince, and the Dragon, and the good and bad enchanters, and the king's fair daughter. Sometimes I would hear them planning about having a house in a forest, keeping bees and a cow, and living entirely on milk and honey. Once I came upon them by the pond, and heard Master Harry say, "Adorable Norah, kiss me, and say you love me to distraction, or I 'll jump in head-foremost." On the whole, sir, the contemplation o' them two babies had a tendency to make me feel as if I was in love myself, — only I did n't exactly know who with.

"Cobbs," says Master Harry, one evening, when I was watering the flowers; "I am going on a visit, this present midsummer, to my grandmamma's at York."

"Are you indeed, sir? I hope you 'll have a pleasant time. I am going into Yorkshire, myself, when I leave here."

"Are you going to your grandmamma's, Cobbs?"

"No, sir. I have n't got such a thing."

"Not as a grandmamma, Cobbs?"

"No, sir."

The boy looks on at the watering of the flowers for a little while, and then he says, "I shall be very glad indeed to go, Cobbs, — Norah 's going."

"You 'll be all right then, sir, with your beautiful sweetheart by your side."

"Cobbs," returns the boy, a flushing, "I never let anybody joke about that when I can prevent them."

"It was n't a joke, sir, — was n't so meant."

"I am glad of that, Cobbs, because I like you, you know, and you 're going to live with us, — Cobbs!"

"Sir."

"What do you think my grandmamma gives me, when I go down there?"

"I could n't so much as make a guess, sir."

"A Bank of England five-pound note, Cobbs."

"Whew! That 's a spanking sum of money, Master Harry."

"A person could do a good deal with such a sum of money as that. Could n't a person, Cobbs?"

"I believe you, sir!"

"Cobbs," says that boy, "I 'll tell you a secret. At Norah's house they have been joking her about me, and pretending to laugh at our being engaged. Pretending to make game of it, Cobbs!"

"Such, sir, is the depravity of human natur."

The boy, looking exactly like his father, stood for a few minutes, and then departed with, "Good night, Cobbs. I 'm going in."

If I was to ask Boots how it happened that I was a going to leave that place just at that present time, well, I could n't rightly answer you, sir. I do suppose I might have stayed there till now, if I had been anyways inclined. But you see, he was younger then, and he wanted change. That 's what I wanted, — change. Mr. Walmers, he says to me, when I give him notice of my intentions to leave, "Cobbs," he says, "have you anything to complain of? I make the inquiry, because if I find that any of my people really has anythink to complain of, I wish to make it right if I can."

"No, sir; thanking you, sir, I find myself as well sitiwated here as I could hope to be anywheres. The truth is, sir, that I 'm a going to seek my fortun."

"O, indeed, Cobbs?" he says; "I hope you may find it." And Boots could assure me — which he did, touching his hair with his bootjack — that he had n't found it yet.

"Well, sir! I left the Elmses when my time was up, and Master Harry, he went down to the old lady's at York, which old lady were so wrapped up in that child as she would have give that child the teeth out of her head (if she had had any). What does that Infant do — for Infant you may call him, and be within the mark — but cut away from that old lady's with his Norah, on a expedition to go to Gretna Green and be married!

Sir, I was at this identical Holly-Tree Inn (having left it several times since to better myself, but always come back through one thing or another), when, one summer afternoon, the coach drives up, and out of the coach gets them two children. The Guard says to our Governor, "I don't quite make out these little passengers, but the young gentleman's words was, that they was to be brought here." The young gentleman gets out; hands his lady out; gives the Guard something for himself; says to our Governor, "We 're to stop here to-night, please. Sitting-room and two bedrooms will be required. Mutton chops and cherry pudding for two!" and tucks her, in her little sky-blue mantle, under his arm, and walks into the house much bolder than Brass.

Sir, I leave you to judge what the amazement of that establishment was, when those two tiny creatures all alone by themselves was marched into the Angel; much more so, when I, who had seen them without their seeing me, give the Governor my views of the expedition they was upon.

"Cobbs," says the Governor, "if this is so, I must set off myself to York and quiet their friends' minds. In which case you must keep your eye upon 'em, and humor 'em, till I come back. But before I take these measures, Cobbs, I should wish you to find from themselves whether your opinions is correct." "Sir to you," says I, "that shall be done directly."

So Boots goes up stairs to the Angel, and there he finds Master Harry on a e-normous sofa, — immense at any time, but looking like the Great Bed of Ware, compared with him, — a drying the eyes of Miss Norah with his pocket-hankecher. Their little legs was entirely off the ground, of course; and it really is not possible to express how small them children looked.

"It 's Cobbs! It 's Cobbs!" cries Master Harry, and he comes running to me and catching hold of my hand. Miss Norah, she comes running to me on t' other side and catching hold of my t' other hand, and they both jump for joy.

"I see you a getting out, sir," says I. "I thought it was you. I thought I could n't be mistaken in your heighth and figure. What 's the object of your journey, sir?— Matrimonial?"

"We are going to be married, Cobbs, at Gretna Green," returns the boy. "We have run away on purpose. Norah has been in rather low spirits, Cobbs; but she 'll be happy, now we have found you to be our friend."

"Thank you sir, and thank *you*, miss, for your good opinion. *Did* you bring any luggage with you, sir?"

If I will believe Boots when he gives me his word and honor upon it, the lady had got a parasol, a smelling-bottle, a round and a half of cold buttered toast, eight peppermint drops, and a Doll's hairbrush. The gentleman had got about half a dozen yards of string, a knife, three or four sheets of writing-paper folded up surprisingly small, a orange, and a Chaney mug with his name on it.

"What may be the exact natur of your plans, sir?" says I.

"To go on," replies the boy, — which the courage of that boy was something wonderful! — "in the morning, and be married to-morrow."

"Just so, sir. Would it meet your views, sir, if I was to accompany you?"

They both jumped for joy again, and cried out, "O yes, yes, Cobbs! Yes!"

"Well, sir, if you will excuse my having the freedom to give an opinion, what I should recommend would be this. I 'm acquainted with a pony, sir, which, put in a pheayton that I could borrow, would take you and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, (driving myself if you approved,) to the end of your journey in a very short space of time. I am not altogether sure, sir, that this pony will be at liberty till to-morrow, but even if you had to wait over to-morrow for him, it might be worth your while. As to the small account here, sir, in case you was to find yourself running at all short, that don't signify; because I 'm a part proprietor of this inn, and it could stand over."

Boots assures me that when they clapped their hands, and jumped for joy again, and called him, "Good Cobbs!" and "Dear Cobbs!" and bent across him to kiss one another in the delight of their confiding hearts, he felt himself the meanest rascal, for deceiving 'em, that ever was born.

"Is there anything you want just at present, sir?" I says, mortally ashamed of myself.

"We should like some cakes after dinner," answers Master Harry, "and two apples—and jam. With dinner we should like to have toast and water. But Norah has always been accustomed to half a glass of currant wine at dessert. And so have I."

"It shall be ordered at the bar, sir," I says.

Sir, I has the feeling as fresh upon me at this minute of speaking as I had then, that I would far rather have had it out in half a dozen rounds with the Governor, than have combined with him; and that I wished with all my heart there was any impossible place where those two babies could make an impossible marriage, and live impossibly happy ever afterwards. However, as it could n't be, I went into the Governor's plans, and the Governor set off for York in half an hour.

The way in which the women of that house — without exception — every one of 'em — married *and* single — took to that boy when they heard the story, is surprising. It was as much as could be done to keep 'em from dashing into the room and kissing him. They climbed up all sorts of places, at the risk of their lives, to look at him through a pane of glass. And they were seven deep at the keyhole.

In the evening, I went into the room to see how the runaway couple was getting on. The gentleman was on the window-seat, supporting the lady in his arms. She had tears upon her face, and was lying, very tired and half asleep, with her head upon his shoulder.

"Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, fatigued, sir?"

"Yes, she is tired, Cobbs; but she is not used to be away from home, and she has been in low spirits again. Cobbs, do you think you could bring a biffin, please?"

"I ask your pardon, sir. What was it you —"

"I think a Norfolk biffin would rouse her, Cobbs. She is very fond of them."

Well, sir, I withdrew in search of the required restorative, and the gentleman handed it to the lady, and fed her with a spoon, and took a little himself. The lady being heavy with sleep, and rather cross, "What should you think, sir," I says, "of a chamber candlestick?" The gentleman approved; the chambermaid went first up the great staircase; the lady, in her sky-blue mantle, followed, gallantly escorted by the gentleman; the gentleman embraced her at her door, and retired to his own apartment, where I locked him up.

Boots could n't but feel with increased acuteness what a base deceiver he was, when they consulted him at breakfast (they had ordered sweet milk-and-water, and toast and currant jelly, over night) about the pony. It really was as much as he could do, he don't mind confessing to me, to look them two young things in the face, and think what a wicked old father of lies he had grown up to be. Howsomever, sir, I went on a lying like a Trojan about the pony. I told 'em that it did so unfort'nately happen that the pony was half clipped, you see, and that he could n't be took out in that state, for fear it should strike to his inside. But that he 'd be finished clipping in the course of the day, and that to-morrow morning at eight o'clock the pheayton would be ready. Boots's view of the whole case, looking back upon it in my room, is, that Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, was beginning to give in. She had n't had her hair curled when she went to bed, and she did n't seem quite up to brushing it herself, and its getting in her eyes put her out. But nothing put out Master Harry. He sat behind his breakfast-cup, a tearing away at the jelly, as if he had been his own father.

In the course of the morning, Master Harry rung the bell, — it was surprising how that there boy did carry on, — and said, in a sprightly way, "Cobbs, is there any good walks in this neighborhood?"

"Yes, sir. There 's Love Lane."

"Get out with you, Cobbs!" — that was that there boy's expression, — "you 're joking."

"Begging your pardon, sir, there really is Love Lane; and a pleasant walk it is, and proud shall I be to show it to yourself and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior."

"Norah, dear," says Master Harry, "this is curious. We really ought to see Love Lane. Put on your bonnet, my sweetest darling, and we will go there with Cobbs."

Boots leaves me to judge what a Beast he felt himself to be, when that young pair told him, as they all three jogged along together, that they had made up their minds to give him two thousand guineas a year as head gardener, on account of his being so true a friend to 'em. Well, sir, I turned the conversation as well as I could, and I took 'em down Love Lane to the water-meadows, and there Master Harry would have drowned himself in a half a moment more, a getting out a water-lily for her, — but nothing daunted that boy. Well, sir, they was tired out. All being so new and strange to 'em, they was tired as tired could be. And they laid down on a bank of daisies, like the children in the wood, leastways meadows, and fell asleep.

I don't know, sir, — perhaps you do, — why it made a man fit to make a fool of himself, to see them two pretty babies a lying there in the clear still sunny day, not dreaming half so hard when they was asleep as they done when they was awake. But Lord! when you come to think of yourself, you know, and what a game you have been up to ever since you was in your own cradle, and what a poor sort of a chap you are, arter all, that 's where it is! Don't you see, sir?

Well, sir, they woke up at last, and then one thing was getting pretty clear to me, namely, that Mrs. Harry Walmerses, Junior's, temper was on the move. When Master Harry took her round the waist, she said he "teased her so"; and when he says, "Norah, my young May Moon, your Harry tease you?" she tells him, "Yes; and I want to go home!"

A biled fowl and baked bread-and-butter pudding brought Mrs. Walmers up a little; but I could have wished, I must privately own to you, sir, to have seen her more sensible of the woice of love, and less abandoning of herself to the currants in the pudding. However, Master Harry, he kep' up, and his noble heart was as fond as ever. Mrs. Walmers turned very sleepy about dusk, and begun to cry. Therefore, Mrs. Walmers went off to bed as per yesterday; and Master Harry ditto repeated.

About eleven or twelve at night comes back the Governor in a chaise, along with Mr. Walmers and a elderly lady. Mr. Walmers says to our missis: "We are much indebted to you, ma'am, for your kind care of our little children, which we can never sufficiently acknowledge. Pray, ma'am, where is my boy?" Our missis says: "Cobbs has the dear child in charge, sir. Cobbs, show Forty!" Then Mr. Walmers, he says: "Ah, Cobbs! I am glad to see *you*. I understood you was here!" And I says: "Yes, sir. Your most obedient, sir."

"I beg your pardon, sir," I adds, while unlocking the door; "I hope you are not angry with Master Harry. For Master Harry is a fine boy, sir, and will do you credit and honor." And Boots signifies to me, that if the fine boy's father had contradicted him in the state of mind in which he then was, he thinks he should have "fetched him a crack," and took the consequences.

But Mr. Walmers only says, "No, Cobbs. No, my good fellow. Thank you!" and, the door being opened, goes in, goes up to the bedside, bends gently down, and kisses the little sleeping face. Then he stands looking at it for a minute, looking wonderfully like it (they do say he ran away with Mrs. Walmers); and then he gently shakes the little shoulder.

"Harry, my dear boy! Harry!"

Master Harry starts up and looks at his pa. Looks at me too. Such is the honor of that mite, that he looks at me, to see whether he has brought me into trouble.

"I am not angry, my child. I only want you to dress yourself and come home."

"Yes, pa."

Master Harry dresses himself quick.

"Please may I" — the spirit of that little creatur, — "please, dear pa, — may I — kiss Norah, before I go?"

"You may, my child."

So he takes Master Harry in his hand, and I leads the way with the candle to that other bedroom, where the elderly lady is seated by the bed, and poor little Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, is fast asleep. There the father lifts the boy up to the pillow, and he lays his little face down for an instant by the little warm face of poor little Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, and gently draws it to him, — a sight so touching to the chambermaids who are a peeping through the door, that one of them calls out, "It 's a shame to part 'em!"

Finally, Boots says, that 's all about it. Mr. Walmers drove away in the chaise, having hold of Master Harry's hand. The elderly lady and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, that was never to be (she married a captain, long afterwards, and died in India), went off next day. In conclusion, Boots puts it to me whether I hold with him in two opinions : firstly, that there are not many couples on their way to be married who are half as innocent as them two children ; secondly, that it would be a jolly good thing for a great many couples on their way to be married, if they could only be stopped in time and brought back separate.

Charles Dickens.

AMRIE AND THE GEESE.

AMRIE tended the geese upon the Holder Green, as they called the pasture-ground upon the little height by Hungerbrook.

It was a pleasant but a troublesome occupation. Especially painful was it to Amrie, that she could do nothing to attach her charge to her. Indeed, they were scarcely to be distinguished one from another. Was it not true what Brown Mariann had said to her as she came out of the Moosbrunnenwood?

"Creatures that live in herds are all and every one stupid."

"I think," said Amrie, "that this is what makes geese stupid; they can do too many things. They can swim and run and fly, but they can do neither well; they are not at home in the water, nor on the ground, nor in the air; and therefore they are stupid."

"I will stand by this," said Mariann; "in thee is concealed an old hermit."

Amrie was often borne into the kingdom of dreams. Freely rose her childish soul upward and cradled itself in unlimited ether. As the larks in the air sang and rejoiced without knowing the limits of their field, so would she soar away beyond the boundaries of the whole country. The soul of the child knew nothing of the limits placed upon the narrow life of reality. Whoever is accustomed to wonder will find a miracle in every day.

"Listen!" she would say; "the cuckoo calls! It is the living echo of the woods calling and answering itself. The bird sits over there in the service-tree. Look up, and he will fly away. How loud he cries, and how unceasingly! That little bird has a stronger voice than a man. Place thyself upon the tree and imitate him; thou wilt not be heard so far as this bird, who is no larger than my hand. Listen! Perhaps he is an enchanted prince, and he may suddenly begin to speak to thee. "Yes," she continued, "only tell me thy riddle, and I will soon find the meaning of it; and then will I disenchant thee."

While Amrie's thoughts were wandering beyond all bounds, the geese also felt themselves at liberty to stray away and enjoy the good things of the neighboring clover or barley field. Awaking out of her dreams, she had great trouble in bringing the geese back; and when these freebooters returned in regiments, they had much to tell of the goodly land where they had fed so well. There seemed no end to their gossipping and chattering.

Again Amrie soared. "Look! there fly the birds! No bird in the air goes astray. Even the swallows, as they pass and repass, are always safe, always free! O, could we only fly! How must the world look above, where the larks soar! Hurrah! Always higher and higher, farther and farther! O, if I could but fly!"

Then she sang herself suddenly away from all the noise and from all her thoughts. Her breath, which with the idea of flying had grown deeper and quicker, as though she really hovered in the high ether, became again calm and measured.

Of the thousand-fold meanings that lived in Amrie's soul, Brown Mariann received only at times an intimation. Once, when she came from the forest with her load of wood, and with May-bugs and worms for Amrie's geese imprisoned in her sack, the latter said to her, "Aunt, do you know why the wind blows?"

"No, child. Do you?"

"Yes; I have observed that everything that grows must move about. The bird flies, the beetle creeps; the hare, the stag, the horse, and all animals must run. The fish swim, and so do the frogs. But there stand the trees, the corn, and the grass; they cannot go forth, and yet they must grow. Then comes the wind, and says, "Only stand still, and I will do for you what others can do for themselves. See how I turn, and shake, and bend you! Be glad that I come! I do thee good, even if I make thee weary."

Brown Mariann only made her usual speech in reply, "I maintain it; in thee is concealed the soul of an old hermit."

The quail began to be heard in the high rye-fields; near Amrie, the field larks sang the whole day long. They wandered here and there and sang so tenderly, so into the deepest heart, it seemed as though they drew their inspiration from the source of life, — from the soul itself. The tone was more beautiful than that of the skylark, which soars high in the air. Often one of the birds came so near to Amrie that she said, "Why cannot I tell thee that I will not hurt thee? Only stay!" But the bird was timid, and flew farther off.

At noon, when Brown Mariann came to her, she said, "Could I only know what a bird finds to say, singing the whole day long! Even then he has not sung it all out!"

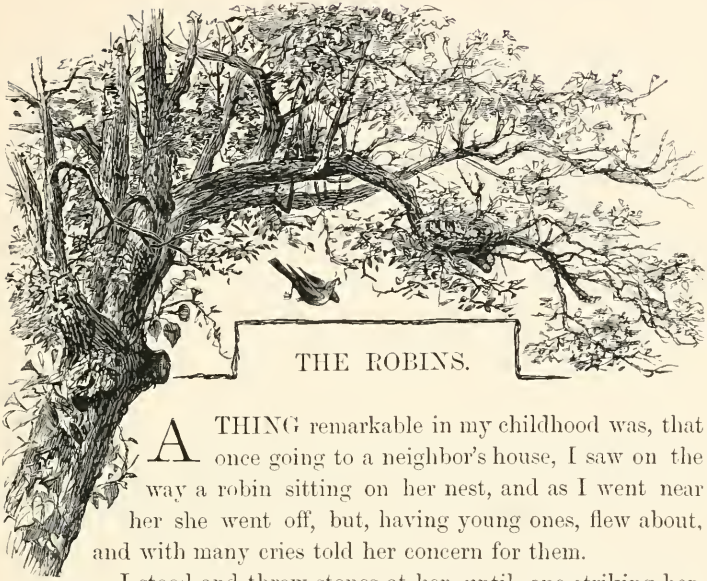
Mariann answered, "See here! A bird keeps nothing to himself, to ponder over. But within man there is always something speaking on, so softly! There are thoughts in us that talk, and weep, and sing so quietly we scarcely hear them ourselves. Not so with the bird; when his song is done, he only wants to eat or sleep."

As Mariann turned and went forth with her bundle of sticks, Amrie looked after her, smiling. "There goes a great singing bird!" she thought to herself.

None but the sun saw how long the child continued to smile and to think. Silently she sat dreaming, as the wind moved the shadows of the branches around her. Then she gazed at the clouds, motionless on the horizon, or chasing each other through the sky. As in the wide space without, so in the soul of the child, the cloud-pictures arose and melted away.

Thus, day after day, Amrie lived.

"*The Little Barefoot.*"



THE ROBINS.

A THING remarkable in my childhood was, that once going to a neighbor's house, I saw on the way a robin sitting on her nest, and as I went near her she went off, but, having young ones, flew about, and with many cries told her concern for them.

I stood and threw stones at her, until, one striking her, she fell down dead. At first I was pleased with the exploit, but after a few minutes was seized with horror for having in a sportive way killed an innocent creature while she was careful of her young. I beheld her lying dead, and thought that these young ones, for which she was so heedful, must now perish for want of their parent to nourish them ; and after some painful considerations on the subject, I climbed up the tree, took all the young birds and killed them, supposing that to be better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably. I believed in this case that the Scripture proverb was fulfilled : "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

I then went on my errand, but for some hours could think of little else than the cruelties I had committed, and was troubled.

. He whose tender mercies are over all his works hath placed a principle in the human mind which incites to goodness towards every living creature; and this being singly attended to, we become tender-hearted and sympathizing; but being frequently rejected, the mind becomes shut up in a contrary disposition.

I often remember the Fountain of Goodness which gives being to all creatures, and whose love extends to the caring for the sparrow; and I believe that where the love of God is verily perfected, a tenderness toward all creatures made subject to us will be felt, and a care that we do not lessen that sweetness of life in the animal creation which their Creator intended for them.

John Woolman.

THE FISH I DID N'T CATCH.

OUR old homestead (the house was very old for a new country, having been built about the time that the Prince of Orange drove out James the Second) nestled under a long range of hills which stretched off to the west. It was surrounded by woods in all directions save to the southeast, where a break in the leafy wall revealed a vista of low green meadows, picturesque with wooded islands and jutting capes of upland. Through these, a small brook, noisy enough as it foamed, rippled, and laughed down its rocky falls by our garden-side, wound, silently and scarcely visible, to a still larger stream, known as the Country Brook. This brook in its turn, after doing duty at two or three saw and grist mills, the clack of which we could hear in still days across the intervening woodlands, found its way to the great river, and the river took it up and bore it down to the great sea.

I have not much reason for speaking well of these meadows, or rather bogs, for they were wet most of the year; but in the early days they were highly prized by the settlers, as they furnished natural mowing before the uplands could be cleared of wood and stones and laid down to grass. There is a tradition that the hay-harvesters of two adjoining towns quarrelled about a boundary question, and fought a hard battle one summer morning in that old time, not altogether bloodless, but by no means as fatal as the fight between the rival Highland clans, described by Scott in "The Fair Maid of Perth." I used to wonder at their folly, when I was stumbling over the rough hassocks, and sinking knee-deep in the black mire, raking the sharp sickle-edged grass which we used to feed out to the young cattle in midwinter when the bitter cold gave them appetite for even such fodder. I had an almost Irish hatred of snakes, and these meadows were full of them, — striped, green, dingy water-snakes, and now and then an ugly spotted adder by no means pleasant to touch with bare feet. There were great black snakes, too, in the ledges of the neighboring knolls; and on one occasion in early spring I found myself in the midst of a score at least of them, — holding their wicked meeting of a Sabbath morning on the margin of a deep spring in the meadows. One glimpse at their fierce shining heads in the sunshine, as they roused themselves at my approach, was sufficient to send me at full speed towards the nearest upland. The snakes, equally scared, fled in the same direction; and, looking back, I saw the dark monsters following close at my heels, terrible as the Black Horse rebel regiment at Bull Run. I had, happily, sense enough left to step aside and let the ugly troop glide into the bushes.

Nevertheless, the meadows had their redeeming points. In spring mornings the blackbirds and bobolinks made them musical with songs; and in the evenings great bullfrogs croaked and clamored; and on summer nights we loved to watch the white wreaths of fog rising and drifting in the moonlight like troops of ghosts, with the fireflies throwing up ever and anon signals of their coming. But the Brook was far more attractive, for it had sheltered bathing-places, clear and white sanded, and weedy stretches, where the shy pickerel loved to linger, and deep pools, where the stupid sucker stirred the black mud with his fins. I had followed it all the way from its birthplace among the pleasant New Hampshire hills, through the sunshine of broad, open meadows, and under the shadow of thick woods. It was, for the most part, a sober, quiet little river; but at intervals it broke into a low, rippling laugh over rocks and trunks of fallen trees. There had, so tradition said, once been a witch-meeting on its banks, of six little old women in short, sky-blue cloaks; and if a drunken teamster could be credited, a ghost was once seen bobbing for eels under Country Bridge. It ground our corn and rye for us, at its two grist-mills; and we drove our sheep to it for their spring washing, an anniversary which was looked forward to with intense delight, for it was always rare fun for the youngsters. Macaulay has sung, —

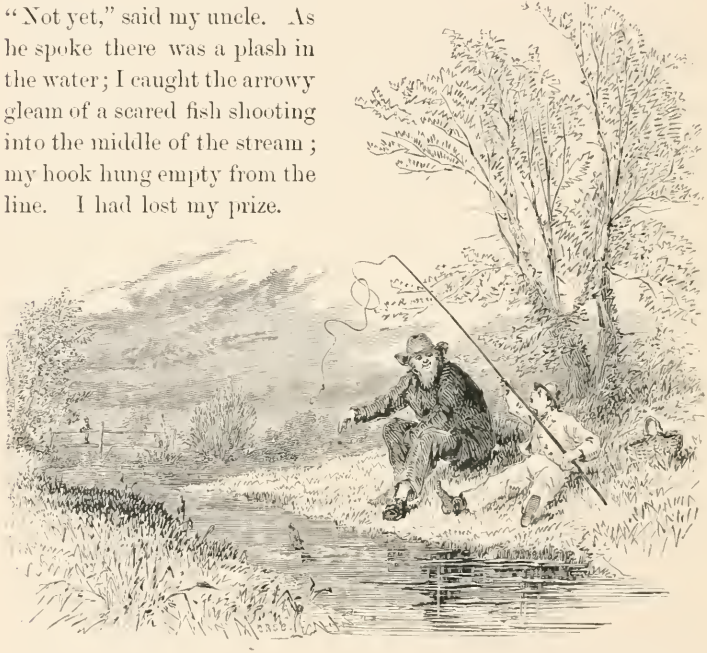
> "That year young lads in Umbro
> Shall plunge the struggling sheep" ;

and his picture of the Roman sheep-washing recalled, when we read it, similar scenes in the Country Brook. On its banks we could always find the earliest and the latest wild flowers, from the pale blue, three-lobed hepatica, and small, delicate wood-anemone, to the yellow bloom of the witch-hazel burning in the leafless October woods.

Yet, after all, I think the chief attraction of the Brook to my brother and myself was the fine fishing it afforded us. Our bachelor uncle who lived with us (there has always been one of that unfortunate class in every generation of our family) was a quiet, genial man, much given to hunting and fishing; and it was one of the great pleasures of our young life to accompany him on his expeditions to Great Hill, Brandy-brow Woods, the Pond, and, best of all, to the Country Brook. We were quite willing to work hard in the cornfield or the haying-lot to finish the necessary day's labor in season for an afternoon stroll through the woods and along the brookside. I remember my first fishing excursion as if it were but yesterday. I have been happy many times in my life, but never more intensely so than when I received that first fishing-pole from my uncle's hand, and trudged off with him through the woods and meadows. It was a still sweet day of early summer; the long afternoon shadows of the trees lay cool across our path; the leaves seemed greener, the flowers brighter, the birds merrier, than ever before. My uncle, who knew by long experience where were the best haunts of pickerel, considerately placed me at the most favorable point. I threw out my line as I had so often seen others, and waited anxiously for a bite, moving the bait in rapid jerks on the surface of the water in imitation of the leap of a frog. Nothing came of it. "Try again," said my uncle. Suddenly the bait sank out of sight. "Now for it," thought I; "here is a fish at last." I made a strong pull, and brought up a tangle of weeds. Again and again I cast out my line with aching arms, and drew it back empty. I looked to my uncle appealingly. "Try once more," he said; "we fishermen must have patience."

Suddenly something tugged at my line and swept off with it into deep water. Jerking it up, I saw a fine pickerel wriggling in the sun. "Uncle!" I cried, looking back in uncontrollable excitement, "I've got a fish!"

"Not yet," said my uncle. As he spoke there was a plash in the water; I caught the arrowy gleam of a scared fish shooting into the middle of the stream; my hook hung empty from the line. I had lost my prize.



We are apt to speak of the sorrows of childhood as trifles in comparison with those of grown-up people; but we may depend upon it the young folks don't agree with us. Our griefs, modified and restrained by reason, experience, and self-respect, keep the proprieties, and, if possible, avoid a scene; but the sorrow of childhood, unreasoning and all-absorbing, is a complete abandonment to the passion. The doll's nose is broken, and the world breaks up with it ; the marble rolls out of sight, and the solid globe rolls off with the marble.

So, overcome by my great and bitter disappointment, I sat down on the nearest hassock, and for a time refused to be comforted, even by my uncle's assurance that there were more fish in the brook. He refitted my bait, and, putting the pole again in my hands, told me to try my luck once more.

"But remember, boy," he said, with his shrewd smile, "never brag of catching a fish until he is on dry ground. I 've seen older folks doing that in more ways than one, and so making fools of themselves. It 's no use to boast of anything until it 's done, nor then either, for it speaks for itself."

How often since I have been reminded of the fish that I did not catch! When I hear people boasting of a work as yet undone, and trying to anticipate the credit which belongs only to actual achievement, I call to mind that scene by the brookside, and the wise caution of my uncle in that particular instance takes the form of a proverb of universal application: "NEVER BRAG OF YOUR FISH BEFORE YOU CATCH HIM."

John G. Whittier.

LITTLE KATE WORDSWORTH.

WHEN I first settled in Grasmere, Catherine Wordsworth was in her infancy, but even at that age she noticed me more than any other person, excepting, of course, her mother. She was not above three years old when she died, so that there could not have been much room for the expansion of her understanding, or the unfolding of her real character. But there was room in her short life, and too much, for love the most intense to settle upon her.

The whole of Grasmere is not large enough to allow of any great distance between house and house; and as it happened that little Kate Wordsworth returned my love, she in a manner lived with me at my solitary cottage. As often as I could entice her from home, she walked with me, slept with me, and was my sole companion.

That I was not singular in ascribing some witchery to the nature and manners of this innocent child may be gathered from the following beautiful lines by her father. They are from the poem entitled "Characteristics of a Child Three Years Old," dated, at the foot, 1811, which must be an oversight, as she was not so old until the following year.

> "Loving she is, and tractable, though wild;
> And Innocence hath privilege in her
> To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes,
> And feats of cunning, and the pretty round
> Of trespasses, affected to provoke
> Mock chastisement, and partnership in play.
> And as a fagot sparkles on the hearth
> Not less if unattended and alone
> Than when both young and old sit gathered round,
> And take delight in its activity, —

> Even so this happy creature of herself
> Was all-sufficient. Solitude to her
> Was blithe society, who filled the air
> With gladness and involuntary songs."

It was this radiant spirit of joyousness, making solitude, for her, blithe society, and filling from morning to night the air with gladness and involuntary songs, — this it was which so fascinated my heart that I became blindly devoted to this one affection.

In the spring of 1812 I went up to London; and early in June I learned by a letter from Miss Wordsworth, her aunt, that she had died suddenly. She had gone to bed in good health about sunset on June 4, was found speechless a little before midnight, and died in the early dawn, just as the first gleams of morning began to appear above Seat Sandel and Fairfield, the mightiest of the Grasmere barriers, — about an hour, perhaps, before sunrise.

Over and above my love for her, I had always viewed her as an impersonation of the dawn, and of the spirit of infancy; and this, with the connection which, even in her parting hours, she assumed with the summer sun, timing her death with the rising of that fountain of life, — these impressions recoiled into such a contrast to the image of death, that each exalted and brightened the other.

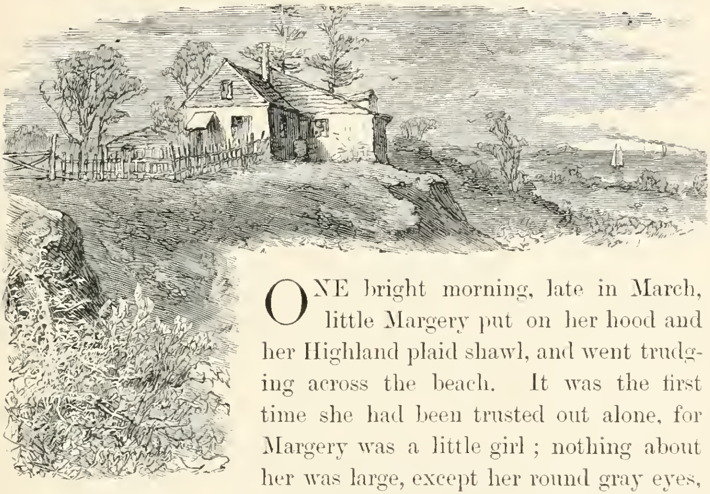
I returned hastily to Grasmere, stretched myself every night on her grave, in fact often passed the whole night there, in mere intensity of sick yearning after neighborhood with the darling of my heart.

In Sir Walter Scott's "Demonology," and in Dr. Abercrombie's "Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers," there are some remarkable illustrations of the creative faculties awakened in the eye or other organs by peculiar states of passion; and it is worthy of a place among cases of that nature, that in many solitary fields, at a considerable elevation above the level of the valleys, — fields which, in the local dialect, are called "intacks," — my eye was haunted, at times, in broad noonday (oftener, however, in the afternoon), with a facility, but at times also with a necessity, for weaving, out of a few simple elements, a perfect picture of little Kate in her attitude and onward motion of walking.

I resorted constantly to these "intacks," as places where I was little liable to disturbance; and usually I saw her at the opposite side of the field, which sometimes might be at the distance of a quarter of a mile, generally not so much. Almost always she carried a basket on her head; and usually the first hint upon which the figure arose commenced in wild plants, such as tall ferns, or the purple flowers of the foxglove. But whatever these might be, uniformly the same little full-formed figure arose, uniformly dressed in the little blue bed-gown and black skirt of Westmoreland, and uniformly with the air of advancing motion.

Thomas De Quincey.

HOW MARGERY WONDERED.



ONE bright morning, late in March, little Margery put on her hood and her Highland plaid shawl, and went trudging across the beach. It was the first time she had been trusted out alone, for Margery was a little girl; nothing about her was large, except her round gray eyes, which had yet scarcely opened upon half a dozen springs and summers.

There was a pale mist on the far-off sea and sky, and up around the sun were white clouds edged with the hues of pinks and violets. The sunshine and the mild air made Margery's very heart feel warm, and she let the soft wind blow aside her Highland shawl, as she looked across the waters at the sun, and wondered!

For, somehow, the sun had never looked before as it did to-day; — it seemed like a great golden flower bursting out of its pearl-lined calyx, — a flower without a stem! Or was there a strong stem away behind it in the sky, that reached down below the sea, to a root, nobody could guess where?

Margery did not stop to puzzle herself about the answer to her question, for now the tide was coming in, and the waves, little at first, but growing larger every moment, were crowding up, along the sand and pebbles, laughing, winking, and whispering, as they tumbled over each other, like thousands of children hurrying home from somewhere, each with its own precious little secret to tell. Where did the waves come from? Who was down there under the blue wall of the horizon, with the hoarse, hollow voice, urging and pushing them across the beach to her feet? And what secret was it they were lisping to each other with their pleasant voices? O, what was there beneath the sea, and beyond the sea, so deep, so broad, and so dim too, away off where the white ships, that looked smaller than sea-birds, were gliding out and in?

But while Margery stood still for a moment on a dry rock and wondered, there came a low, rippling warble to her ear from a cedar-tree on the cliff above her. It had been a long winter, and Margery had forgotten that there were birds, and that birds could sing. So she wondered again what the music was. And when she saw the bird perched on a yellow-brown bough, she wondered yet more. It was only a bluebird, but then it was the first bluebird Margery had ever seen. He fluttered among the prickly twigs, and looked as if he had grown out of them, as the cedar-berries had, which were dusty-blue, the color of his coat. But how did the music get into his throat? And after it was in his throat, how could it untangle itself, and wind itself off so evenly? And where had the bluebird flown from, across the snow-banks, down to the shore of the blue sea? The waves sang a welcome to him, and he sang a welcome to the waves; they seemed to know each other well; and the ripple and the warble sounded so much alike, the bird and the wave must both have learned their music of the same teacher. And Margery kept on wondering as she stepped between the song of the bluebird and the echo of the sea, and climbed a sloping bank, just turning faintly green in the spring sunshine.

The grass was surely beginning to grow! There were fresh, juicy shoots running up among the withered blades of last year, as if in hopes of bringing them back to life; and closer down she saw the sharp points of new spears peeping from their sheaths. And scattered here and there were small dark green leaves folded around buds shut up so tight that only those who had watched them many seasons could tell what flowers were to be let out of their safe prisons by and by. So no one could blame Margery for not knowing that they were only common things, — mouse-ear, dandelions, and cinquefoil; nor for stooping over the tiny buds, and wondering.

What made the grass come up so green out of the black earth? And how did the buds know when it was time to take off their little green hoods, and see what there was in the world around them? And how came they to be buds at all? Did they bloom in another world before they sprung up here? — and did they know, themselves, what kind of flowers they should blossom into? Had flowers souls, like little girls, that would live in another world when their forms had faded away from this?

Margery thought she should like to sit down on the bank and wait beside the buds until they opened; perhaps they would tell her their secret if the very first thing they saw was her eyes watching them. One bud was beginning to unfold; it was streaked with yellow in little stripes that she could imagine became wider every minute. But she would not touch it, for it seemed almost as much alive as herself. She only wondered, and wondered!

But the dash of the waves grew louder, and the bluebird had not stopped singing yet, and the sweet sounds drew Margery's feet down to the beach again, where she played with the shining pebbles, and sifted the sand through her plump fingers, stopping now and then to wonder a little about everything, until she heard her mother's voice calling her, from the cottage on the cliff.

Then Margery trudged home across the shells and pebbles with a pleasant smile dimpling her cheeks, for she felt very much at home in this large, wonderful world, and was happy to be alive, although she neither could have told, nor cared to know, the reason why. But when her mother unpinned the little girl's Highland shawl, and took off her hood, she said, "O mother, do let me live on the door-step! I don't like houses to stay in. What makes everything so pretty and so glad? Don't you like to wonder?"

Margery's mother was a good woman. But then there was all the housework to do, and if she had thoughts, she did not often let them wander outside the kitchen door. And just now she was baking some gingerbread, which was in danger of getting burned in the oven. So she pinned the shawl around the child's neck again, and left her on the door-step, saying to herself, as she returned to her work, "Queer child! I wonder what kind of a woman she will be!"

But Margery sat on the door-step, and wondered, as the sea sounded louder, and the sunshine grew warmer around her. It was all so strange, and grand, and beautiful! Her heart danced with joy to the music that went echoing through the wide world from the roots of the sprouting grass to the great golden blossom of the sun.

And when the round, gray eyes closed that night, at the first peep of the stars, the angels looked down and wondered over Margery. For the wisdom of the wisest being God has made ends in wonder; and there is nothing on earth so wonderful as the budding soul of a little child.

Lucy Larcom.

THE NETTLE-GATHERER.

VERY early in the spring, when the fresh grass was just appearing, before the trees had got their foliage, or the beds of white campanula and blue anemone were open, a poor little girl with a basket on her arm went out to search for nettles.

Near the stone wall of the churchyard was a bright green spot, where grew a large bunch of nettles. The largest stung little Karine's fingers. "Thank you for nothing!" said she; "but, whether you like it or not, you must all be put into my basket."

Little Karine blew on her smarting finger, and the wind followed suit. The sun shone out warm, and the larks began to sing. As Karine was standing there listening to the song of the birds, and warming herself in the sun, she perceived a beautiful butterfly.

"O, the first I have seen this year! What sort of summer shall I have? Let me see your colors. Black and bright red. Sorrow and joy in turn. It is very likely I may go supperless to bed, but then there is the pleasure of gathering flowers, making hay, and playing tricks." Remembrance and expectation made her laugh.

The butterfly stretched out its dazzling wings, and, after it had settled on a nettle, waved itself backwards and forwards in the sunshine. There was also something else upon the nettle, which looked like a shrivelled-up light brown leaf. The sun was just then shining down with great force upon the spot, and while she looked the brown object moved, and two little leaves rose gently up which by and by became two beautiful little wings; and behold, it was a butterfly just come out of the chrysalis! Fresh life was infused into it by the warm rays of the sun, and how happy it was!

The two butterflies must have been friends whom some unlucky chance had separated. They flew about, played at hide-and-seek, waltzed with each other, and seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves in the bright sunshine. One flew away three times into a neighboring orchard. The other seated itself on a nettle to rest. Karine went gently towards it, put her hands quickly over it, and got possession both of the butterfly and the nettle. She then put them into the basket, which she covered with a red cotton handkerchief, and went home happy.

The nettles were bought by an old countess, who lived in a grand apartment, and had a weakness for nettle soup. Karine received a silver piece for them. With this in her hand, the butterfly in her basket, and also two large gingercakes which had been given to her by the kind countess, the happy girl went into the room where her mother and little brother awaited her. There were great rejoicings over the piece of silver, the gingercakes, and the butterfly.

But the butterfly did not appear as happy with the children as the children were with the butterfly. It would not eat any of the gingerbread, or anything else which the children offered, but was always fluttering against the window-pane, and when it rested on the ledge it put out a long proboscis, drew it in again, and appeared to be sucking something; however, it found nothing to suit its taste, so it flew about again, and beat its wings with such force against the window-pane, that Karine began to fear it would come to grief. Two days passed in this way. The butterfly would not be happy.

"It wants to get out," thought Karine; "it wants to find a home and something to eat." So she opened the window.

Ah, how joyfully the butterfly flew out into the open air! it seemed to be quite happy. Karine ran after it to see which way it took. It flew over the churchyard, which was near Karine's dwelling. There little yellow star-like flowers of every description were in bud; among them the spring campanula, otherwise called the morning-star. Into the calyxes of these little flowers it thrust its proboscis, and sucked a sweet juice therefrom; for at the bottom of the calyx of almost every flower there is a drop of sweet juice which God has provided for the nourishment of insects, — bees, drones, butterflies, and many other little creatures.

The butterfly then flew to the bunch of nettles on the hill. The large nettle which had stung Karine's finger now bore three white bell-shaped flowers, which looked like a crown on the top of the stalk, and many others were nearly out. The butterfly drew honey from the white nettle-blossoms and embraced the plant with its wings, as children do a tender mother.

"It has now returned to its home," thought Karine, and she felt very glad to have given the butterfly its liberty.

Summer came. The child enjoyed herself under the lime-trees in the churchyard, and in the meadows where she got the beautiful yellow catkins, which were as soft as the down of the goslings, and which she was so fond of playing with, also the young twigs which she liked cutting into pipes or whistles. Fir-trees and pines blossomed and bore fir-cones; the sheep and calves were growing, and drank the dew, which is called the "Blessed Virgin's hand," out of the trumpet moss, which with its small white and purple cup grew on the steep shady banks.

Karine now gathered flowers to sell. The nettles had long ago become too old and rank, but the nettle butterflies still flew merrily about among them.

One day Karine saw her old friend sit on a leaf, as if tired and worn out, and when it flew away the child found a little gray egg lying on the very spot where it had rested, whereupon she made a mark on the nettle and the leaf.

She forgot the nettles for a long time, and it seemed as if the butterfly had also forgotten them, for it was there no more. Larger and more beautiful butterflies were flying about there, higher up in the air. There was the magnificent Apollo-bird, with large white wings and scarlet eyes; also the Antiopa, with its beautiful blue and white velvet band on the edge of its dark velvet dress; and farther on the dear little blue glittering Zefprinner, and many others.

Karine gathered flowers, and then went into the hay-field to work; still, it often happened that she and her little brother went supperless to bed. But then their father played on the violin, and made them forget that they were hungry, and its tones lulled them to sleep.

One day, when Karine was passing by the nettles, she stopped, rejoiced to see them again. She saw that the nettles were a little bent down, and, upon examination, found a number of small green caterpillars, resembling those which we call cabbage-grubs, and they seemed to enjoy eating the nettle leaves as much as the old countess did her nettle soup. She saw that they covered the exact spot where she had made a mark, and that the leaf was nearly eaten up by the caterpillars, and Karine immediately thought that they must be the butterfly's children. And so they were, for they had come from its eggs.

"Ah!" thought Karine, "if my little brother and I, who sometimes can eat more than our father and mother can give us, could become butterflies, and find something to eat as easily as these do, would it not be pleasant?" She broke off the nettle on which the butterfly had laid its eggs, — but this time she carefully wound her handkerchief round her hand, — and carried it home.

On her arrival there, she found all the little grubs had crawled away, with the exception of one, which was still eating and enjoying itself. Karine put the nettle into a glass of water, and every day a fresh leaf appeared. The caterpillar quickly increased in size, and seemed to thrive wonderfully well. The child took great pleasure in it, and wondered within herself how large it would be at last, and when its wings would come.

But one morning it appeared very quiet and sleepy, and would not eat, and became every moment more weary, and seemed ill. "O," said Karine, "it is certainly going to die, and there will be no butterfly from it ; what a pity ! "

It was evening, and the next morning Karine found with astonishment that the caterpillar had spun round itself a sort of web, in which it lay, no longer a living green grub, but a stiff brown chrysalis. She took it out of the cocoon ; it was as if enclosed in a shell. "It is dead," said the child, "and is now lying in its coffin ! But I will still keep it, for it has been so long with us, and at any rate it will be something belonging to my old favorite." Karine then laid it on the earth in a little flower-pot which stood in the window, in which there was a balsam growing.

The long winter came, and much, very much snow. Karine and her little brother had to run barefooted through it all. The boy got a cough. He became paler and paler, would not eat anything, and lay tired and weary, just like the grub of the caterpillar shortly before it became a chrysalis.

The snow melted, the April sun reappeared, but the little boy played out of doors no more. His sister went out again to gather nettles and blue anemones, but no longer with a merry heart. When she came home, she would place the anemones on her little brother's sick-bed. And as time went on, one day he lay there stiff and cold, with eyes fast closed. In a word, he was dead. They placed him in a coffin, took him to the churchyard, and laid him in the ground, and the priest threw three handfuls of earth over the coffin. Karine's heart was so heavy that she did not heed the blessed words which were spoken of the resurrection unto everlasting life.

Karine only knew that her brother was dead, that she had no longer any little brother whom she could play with, and love, and be loved by in return. She wept bitterly when she thought how gentle and good he was. She went crying into the meadows, gathered all the flowers and young leaves she could find, and strewed them on her brother's grave, and sat there weeping for many hours.

One day she took the pot with the balsam in it, and also the chrysalis, and said, "I will plant the balsam on the grave, and bury the butterfly's grub with my dear little brother." Again she wept bitterly while she thought to herself: "Mother said that my brother lives, and is happy with God; but I saw him lying in the coffin, and put into the grave, and how can he then come back again? No, no; he is dead, and I shall never see either of them again."

Poor little Karine sobbed, and dried her tears with the hand that was free. In the other lay the chrysalis, and the sun shone upon it. There was a low crackling in the shell, and a violent motion within, and, behold! she saw a living insect crawl out, which threw off its shell as a man would his cloak, and sat on Karine's hand, breathing, and at liberty. In a short time wings began to appear from its back. Karine looked on with a beating heart. She saw its wings increase in size, and become colored in the brightness of the spring sun. Presently the new-born butterfly moved its proboscis, and tried to raise its young wings, and she recognized her nettle butterfly. And when, after an hour, he fluttered his wings to prepare for flight, and flew around the child's head and among the flowers, an unspeakably joyful feeling came over Karine, and she said, "The shell of the chrysalis has burst, and the caterpillar within has got wings; in like manner is my little brother freed from his mortal body, and has become an angel in the presence of God."

In the night she dreamed that her brother and herself, with butterfly's wings, and joy beaming in their eyes, were soaring far, far away, above their earthly home, towards the millions of bright shining stars; and the stars became flowers, whose nectar they drank; and over them was a wondrous bright light, and they heard sounds of music, — so grand and beautiful! Karine recognized the tones she had heard on earth, when their father played for her and her little brother in their poor cottage, when they were hungry. But this was so much more grand! Yet it was so beautiful, so exceedingly beautiful, that Karine awoke. A rosy light filled the room, the morning dawn was breaking, and the sun was looking in love upon the earth, reviving everything with his gentleness and strength.

Karine wept no more. She felt great inward joy. When she again went to visit the nettles, and saw the little caterpillars crawling on the leaves, she said in a low voice, "You only crawl now, you little things! By and by you will have wings as well as I, and you know not how glorious it will be at the last."

From the Swedish.

LITTLE ARTHUR'S PRAYER.

THE little school-boys went quietly to their own beds, and began undressing and talking to one another in whispers; while the elder, amongst whom was Tom, sat chatting about on one another's beds, with their jackets and waistcoats off. Poor little Arthur was overwhelmed with the novelty of his position. The idea of sleeping in the room with strange boys had clearly never crossed his mind before, and was as painful as it was strange to him. He could hardly bear to take his jacket off; however, presently, with an effort, off it came, and then he paused and looked at Tom, who was sitting at the bottom of his bed, talking and laughing.

"Please, Brown," he whispered, "may I wash my face and hands?"

"Of course, if you like," said Tom, staring; "that 's your washhand-stand under the window, second from your bed. You 'll have to go down for more water in the morning if you use it all." And on he went with his talk, while Arthur stole timidly from between the beds out to his washhand-stand, and began his ablutions, thereby drawing for a moment on himself the attention of the room.

On went the talk and laughter. Arthur finished his washing and undressing, and put on his night-gown. He then looked round more nervously than ever. Two or three of the little boys were already in bed, sitting up with their chins on their knees. The light burned clear, the noise went on. It was a trying moment for the poor little lonely boy; however, this time he did not ask Tom what he might or might not do, but dropped on his knees by his bedside, as he had done every day from his childhood, to open his heart to Him who heareth the cry and beareth the sorrows of the tender child, and the strong man in agony.

Tom was sitting at the bottom of his bed unlacing his boots, so that his back was towards Arthur, and he did not see what had happened, and looked up in wonder at the sudden silence. Then two or three boys laughed and sneered, and a big brutal fellow who was standing in the middle of the room picked up a slipper, and shied it at the kneeling boy, calling him a snivelling young shaver. Then Tom saw the whole, and the next moment the boot he had just pulled off flew straight at the head of the bully, who had just time to throw up his arm and catch it on his elbow.

"Confound you, Brown; what 's that for?" roared he, stamping with pain.

"Never mind what I mean," said Tom, stepping on to the floor, every drop of blood in his body tingling; "if any fellow wants the other boot, he knows how to get it."

What would have been the result is doubtful, for at this moment the sixth-form boy came in, and not another word could be said. Tom and the rest rushed into bed and finished their unrobing there, and the old verger, as punctual as the clock, had put out the candle in another minute, and toddled on to the next room, shutting their door with his usual "Good night, genl'm'n."

There were many boys in the room by whom that little scene was taken to heart before they slept. But sleep seemed to have deserted the pillow of poor Tom. For some time his excitement, and the flood of memories which chased one another through his brain, kept him from thinking or resolving. His head throbbed, his heart leapt, and he could hardly keep himself from springing out of bed and rushing about the room. Then the thought of his own mother came across him, and the promise he had made at her knee, years ago, never to forget to kneel by his bedside, and give himself up to his Father, before he laid his head on the pillow, from which it might never rise; and he lay down gently, and cried as if his heart would break. He was only fourteen years old.

It was no light act of courage in those days for a little fellow to say his prayers publicly, even at Rugby. A few years later, when Arnold's manly piety had begun to leaven the school, the tables turned; before he died, in the schoolhouse at least, and I believe in the other houses, the rule was the other way. But poor Tom had come to school in other times. The first few nights after he came he did not kneel down because of the noise, but sat up in bed till the candle was out, and then stole out and said his prayers, in fear lest some one should find him out. So did many another poor little fellow. Then he began to think that he might just as well say his prayers in bed, and then that it did not matter whether he was kneeling, or sitting, or lying down. And so it had come to pass with Tom, as with all who will not confess their Lord before men; and for the last year he had probably not said his prayers in earnest a dozen times.

Poor Tom! the first and bitterest feeling which was like to break his heart was the sense of his own cowardice. The vice of all others which he loathed was brought in and burned in on his own soul. He had lied to his mother, to his conscience, to his God. How could he bear it? And then the poor little weak boy, whom he had pitied and almost scorned for his weakness, had done that which he, braggart as he was, dared not do. The first dawn of comfort came to him in vowing to himself that he would stand by that boy through thick and thin, and cheer him, and help him, and bear his burdens, for the good deed done that night. Then he resolved to write home next day and tell his mother all, and what a coward her son had been. And then peace came to him as he resolved, lastly, to bear his testimony next morning. The morning would be harder than the night to begin with, but he felt that he could not afford to let one chance slip. Several times he faltered, for the Devil showed him first, all his old friends calling him "Saint," and "Squaretoes," and a dozen hard names, and whispered to him that his motives would be misunderstood, and he would only be left alone with the new boy; whereas it was his duty to keep all means of influence, that he might do good to the largest number. And then came the more subtle temptation, "Shall I not be showing myself braver than others by doing this? Have I any right to begin it now? Ought I not rather to pray in my own study, letting other boys know that I do so, and trying to lead them to it, while in public at least I should go on as I have done?" However, his good angel was too strong that night, and he turned on his side and slept, tired of trying to reason, but resolved to follow the impulse which had been so strong, and in which he had found peace.

Next morning he was up and washed and dressed, all but his jacket and waistcoat, just as the ten minutes' bell began to ring, and then in the face of the whole room he knelt down to pray. Not five words could he say, — the bell mocked him; he was listening for every whisper in the room, — what were they all thinking of him? He was ashamed to go on kneeling, ashamed to rise from his knees. At last, as it were from his inmost heart, a still small voice seemed to breathe forth the words of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" He repeated them over and over, clinging to them as for his life, and rose from his knees comforted and humbled, and ready to face the whole world. It was not needed; two other boys besides Arthur had already followed his example, and he went down to the great school with a glimmering of another lesson in his heart, — the lesson that he who has conquered his own coward spirit has conquered the whole outward world; and that other one which the old prophet learned in the cave at Mount Horeb, when he hid his face, and the still small voice asked, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" that however we may fancy ourselves alone on the side of good, the King and Lord of men is nowhere without his witnesses; for in every society, however seemingly corrupt and godless, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

He found, too, how greatly he had exaggerated the effect to be produced by his act. For a few nights there was a sneer or a laugh when he knelt down, but this passed off soon, and one by one all the other boys but three or four followed the lead.

"*School-Days at Rugby.*"

FAITH AND HER MOTHER.

AUNT WINIFRED went again to Worcester to-day. She said that she had to buy trimming for Faith's sack.

She went alone, as usual, and Faith and I kept each other company through the afternoon, — she on the floor with her doll, I in the easy-chair with Macaulay. As the light began to fall level on the floor, I threw the book aside, — being at the end of a volume, — and, Mary Ann having exhausted her attractions, I surrendered unconditionally to the little maiden.

She took me up garret, and down cellar, on top of the woodpile, and into the apple-trees; I fathomed the mysteries of Old Man's Castle and Still Palm; I was her grandmother; I was her baby; I was a rabbit; I was a chestnut horse; I was a watch-dog; I was a mild-tempered giant; I was a bear, "warranted not to eat little girls"; I was a roaring hippopotamus and a canary-bird; I was Jeff Davis, and I was Moses in the bulrushes; and of what I was, the time faileth me to tell.

It comes over me with a curious, mingled sense of the ludicrous and the horrible, that I should have spent the afternoon like a baby and almost as happily, laughing out with the child, past and future forgotten, the tremendous risks of "I spy" absorbing all my present, while what was happening was happening, and what was to come was coming. Not an echo in the air, not a prophecy in the sunshine, not a note of warning in the song of the robins that watched me from the apple-boughs.

As the long, golden afternoon slid away, we came out by the front gate to watch for the child's mother. I was tired, and, lying back on the grass, gave Faith some pink and purple larkspurs, that she might amuse herself in making a chain of them. The picture that she made sitting there on the short dying grass — the light which broke all about her and over her at the first, creeping slowly down and away to the west, her little fingers linking the rich, bright flowers, tube into tube, the dimple on her cheek and the love in her eyes — has photographed itself into my thinking.

How her voice rang out, when the wheels sounded at last, and the carriage, somewhat slowly driven, stopped!

"Mamma, mamma! see what I 've got for you, mamma!"

Auntie tried to step from the carriage, and called me: "Mary, can you help me a little? I am — tired."

I went to her, and she leaned heavily on my arm, and we came up the path.

"Such a pretty little chain, all for you, mamma," began Faith, and stopped, struck by her mother's look.

"It has been a long ride, and I am in pain. I believe I will lie right down on the parlor sofa. Mary, would you be kind enough to give Faith her supper and put her to bed?"

Faith's lip grieved.

"Cousin Mary is n't *you*, mamma. I want to be kissed. You have n't kissed me."

Her mother hesitated for a moment; then kissed her once, twice; put both arms about her neck, and turned her face to the wall without a word.

"Mamma is tired, dear," I said; "come away."

She was lying quite still when I had done what was to be done for the child, and had come back. The room was nearly dark. I sat down on my cricket by her sofa.

"Did you find the sack-trimming?" I ventured, after a pause.

"I believe so, — yes."

She drew a little package from her pocket, held it a moment, then let it roll to the floor forgotten. When I picked it up, the soft, tissue-paper wrapper was wet and hot with tears.

"Mary?"

"Yes."

"I never thought of the little trimming till the last minute. I had another errand."

I waited.

"I thought at first I would not tell you just yet. But I suppose the time has come; it will be no more easy to put it off. I have been to Worcester all these times to see a doctor."

I bent my head in the dark, and listened for the rest.

"He has his reputation; they said he could help me if anybody could. He thought at first he could. But to-day —"

The leaves rustled out of doors. Faith, up stairs, was singing herself to sleep with a droning sound.

"I suppose," she said at length, "I must give up and be sick now; I am feeling the reaction from having kept up so long. He thinks I shall not suffer a very great deal. He thinks he can relieve me, and that it may be soon over.

"There is no chance?"

"No chance."

I took both of her hands, and cried out, "Auntie, Auntie, Auntie!" and tried to think what I was doing, but only cried out the more.

"Why, Mary!" she said; "why, Mary!" and again, as before, she passed her soft hand to and fro across my hair, till by and by I began to think, as I had thought before, that I could bear anything which God, who loved us all, — who *surely* loved us all, — should send.

So then, after I had grown still, she began to tell me about it in her quiet voice; and the leaves rustled, and Faith had sung herself to sleep, and I listened wondering. For there was no pain in the quiet voice, — no pain, nor tone of fear. Indeed, it seemed to me that I detected, through its subdued sadness, a secret, suppressed buoyancy of satisfaction, with which something struggled.

"And you?" I asked, turning quickly upon her.

"I should thank God with all my heart, Mary, if it were not for Faith and you. But it *is* for Faith and you. That 's all."

When I had locked the front door, and was creeping up here to my room, my foot crushed something, and a faint, wounded perfume came up. It was the little pink and purple chain.

"*The Gates Ajar.*"

THE OPEN DOOR.

POOR Mrs. Van Loon was a widow. She had four little children. The eldest was Dirk, a boy of eight years.

One evening she had no bread, and her children were hungry. She folded her hands, and prayed to God; for she served the Lord, and she believed that he loved and could help her.

When she had finished her prayer, Dirk said to her, "Mother, don't we read in the Bible that God sent ravens to a pious man to bring him bread?"

"Yes," answered the mother, "but that 's long, long ago, my dear."

"Well," said Dirk, "then the Lord may send ravens now. I 'll go and open the door, else they can't fly in."

In a trice Dirk jumped to the door, which he left wide open, so that the light of the lamp fell on the pavement of the street.

Shortly after, the burgomaster passed by. The burgomaster is the first magistrate of a Dutch town or village. Seeing the open door, he stopped.

Looking into the room, he was pleased with its clean, tidy appearance, and with the nice little children who were grouped around their mother. He could not help stepping in, and approaching Mrs. Van Loon he said, "Eh, my good woman, why is your door open so late as this?"

Mrs. Van Loon was a little confused when she saw such a well-dressed gentleman in her poor room. She quickly rose and dropped a courtesy to the gentleman; then taking Dirk's cap from his head, and smoothing his hair, she answered, with a smile, "My little Dirk has done it, sir, that the ravens may fly in to bring us bread."

Now, the burgomaster was dressed in a black coat and black trousers, and he wore a black hat. He was quite black all over, except his collar and shirt-front.

"Ah! indeed!" he exclaimed cheerfully. "Dirk is right. Here is a raven, you see, and a large one too. Come along, Dirk, and I 'll show you where the bread is."

The burgomaster took Dirk to his house, and ordered his servant to put two loaves and a small pot of butter into a basket. This he gave to Dirk, who carried it home as quickly as he could. When the other little children saw the bread, they began dancing and clapping their hands. The mother gave to each of them a thick slice of bread and butter, which they ate with the greatest relish.

When they had finished their meal, Dirk went to the open door, and, taking his cap from his head, looked up to the sky, and said, "Many thanks, good Lord!" And after having said this, he shut the door.

John de Liefde.

THE PRINCE'S VISIT.

IT was a holiday in the city, for the Prince was to arrive. As soon as the cannon should sound, the people might know that the Prince had landed from the steamer; and when they should hear the bells ring, that was much the same as being told that the Mayor and Aldermen and City Councillors had welcomed the Prince, by making speeches, and shaking hands, and bowing, and drinking wine; and that now the Prince, dressed in splendid clothes, and wearing a feather in his cap, was actually on his way up the main street of the city, seated in a carriage drawn by four coal-black horses, preceded by soldiers and music, and followed by soldiers, citizens in carriages, and people on foot. Now it was the first time that a Prince had ever visited the city, and it might be the only chance that the people ever would get to see a real son of a king; and so it was universally agreed to have a holiday, and long before the bells rang, or even the cannon sounded, the people were flocking into the main street, well dressed, as indeed they ought to be, when they were to be seen by a Prince.

It was holiday in the stores and in the workshops, although the holiday did not begin at the same hour everywhere. In the great laundry it was to commence when the cannon sounded; and "weak Job," as his comrades called him, who did nothing all day long but turn the crank that worked a great washing-machine, and which was quite as much, they said, as he had wits to do, listened eagerly for the sound of the cannon; and when he heard it, he dropped the crank, and, getting a nod from the head man, shuffled out of the building and made his way home.

Since he had heard of the Prince's coming, Job had thought and dreamed of nothing else; and when he found that they were to have a holiday on his arrival, he was almost beside himself.

He bought a picture of the Prince, and pinned it up on the wall over his bed ; and when he came home at night, tired and hungry, he would sit down by his mother, who mended rents in the clothes brought to the laundry, and talk about the Prince until he could not keep his eyes open longer ; then his mother would kiss him and send him to bed, where he knelt down and prayed the Lord to keep the Prince, and then slept and dreamed of him, dressing him in all the gorgeous colors that his poor imagination could devise, while his mother worked late in her solitary room, thinking of her only boy ; and when she knelt down at night, she prayed the Lord to keep him, and then slept, dreaming also, but with various fancies ; for sometimes she seemed to see Job like his dead father, — strong and handsome and brave and quick-witted, — and now she would see him playing with the children, or shuffling down the court with his head leaning on his shoulder.

To-day he hurried so fast that he was panting for want of breath when he reached the shed-like house where they lived. His mother was watching for him, and he came in nodding his head and rubbing his warm face.

"The cannon has gone off, mother," said he, in great excitement. "The Prince has come ! "

"Everything is ready, Job," said his mother. "You will find all your things in a row on the bed." And Joe tumbled into his room to dress himself for the holiday. Everything was there as his mother had said ; all the old things renewed, and all the new things pieced together that she had worked on so long, and every stitch of which Job had overlooked and almost directed. If there had but been time to spare, how Job would have liked to turn round and round before his scrap of looking-glass ; but there was no time to spare, and so in a very few minutes he was out again, and showing himself to his mother.

"Is n't it splendid ! " said he, surveying himself from top to toe, and looking with special admiration on a white satin scarf that shone round his throat in dazzling contrast to the dingy coat, and which had in it an old brooch which Job treasured as the apple of his eye. Job's mother, too, looked at them both; and though she smiled and did not speak, it was only — brave woman! — because she was choking, as she thought how the satin was the last remnant of her wedding-dress, and the brooch the last trinket left of all given to her years back.

"If you would only have let me wear the feather, mother!" said Job, sorrowfully, in regretful remembrance of one he had long hoarded, and which he had begged hard to wear in his hat.

"You look splendidly, Job, and don't need it," said she, cheerfully; "and, besides, the Prince wears one, and what would he think if he saw you with one, too?"

"Sure enough," said Job, who had not thought of that before; and then he kissed her and started off, while she stood at the door looking anxiously after him. "I don't believe," said he, aloud, as he went up the court, "that the Prince would mind my wearing a feather; but mother did n't want me too. Hark! there are the bells! Yes, he has started!" And Job, forgetting all else, pushed eagerly on. It was a long way from the laundry to his home, and it was a long way, too, from his home to the main street; and so Job had no time to spare if he would get to the crowd in season to see the grand procession, for he wanted to see it all, — from the policemen, who cleared the way, to the noisy omnibuses and carts that led business once more up the holiday streets.

On he shambled, knocking against the flag-stones, and nearly precipitating himself down areas and unguarded passage-ways. He was now in a cross street, which would bring him before long into the main street, and he even thought he heard the distant music and the cheers of the crowd. His heart beat high, and his face was lighted up until it really looked, in its eagerness, as intelligent as that of other people quicker witted than poor Job. And now he had come in sight of the great thoroughfare; it was yet a good way off, but he could see the black swarms of people that lined its edges. The street he was in was quiet, so were all the cross streets, for they had been drained of life to feed the great artery of the main street. There, indeed, was life! upon the sidewalks, packed densely, flowing out in eddies into the alleys and cross streets, rising tier above tier in the shop-fronts, filling all the upper windows, and fringing even the roofs. Flags hung from house to house, and sentences of welcome were written upon strips of canvas. And if one at this moment, when weak Job was hurrying up the cross street, could have looked from some house-top down the main street, he would have seen the Prince's pageant coming nearer and nearer, and would have heard the growing tumult of brazen music, and the waves of cheers that broke along the lines.

It was a glimpse of this sight, and a note of this sound, that weak Job caught in the still street, and with new ardor, although hot and dusty, he pressed on, almost weeping at thought of the joy he was to have. "The Prince is coming," he said, aloud, in his excitement. But at the next step, Job, recklessly tumbling along, despite his weak and troublesome legs, struck something with his feet, and fell forward upon the walk. He could not stop to see what it was that so suddenly and vexatiously tripped him up, and was just moving on with a limp, when he heard behind him a groan and a cry of pain. He turned and saw what his unlucky feet had stumbled over. A poor negro boy, without home or friends, black and unsightly enough, and clad in ragged clothing, had sat down upon the sidewalk, leaning against a tree, and, without strength enough to move, had been the unwilling stumbling-block to poor Job's progress. As Job turned, the poor boy looked at him beseechingly, and stretched out his hands. But even that was an exertion, and his arms dropped by his side again. His lips moved, but no word came forth; and his eyes even closed, as if he could not longer raise the lids.

"He is sick!" said Job, and looked uneasily about. There was no one near. "Hilloa!" cried Job in distress; but no one heard except the black, who raised his eyes again to him, and essayed to move. Job started toward him.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" sounded in the distant street. The roar of the cheering beat against the houses, and at intervals came gusts of music. Poor Job trembled.

"The Prince is coming," said he; and he turned as if to run. But the poor black would not away from his eyes. "He might die while I was gone," said he, and he turned again to lift him up. "He is sick!" he said again. "I will take him home to mother!"

"Hurrah! hurrah! there he is! the Prince! the Prince!" And the dull roar of the cheering, which had been growing louder and louder, now broke into sharp ringing huzzas as the grand procession passed the head of the cross street. In the carriage drawn by four coal-black horses rode the Prince; and he was dressed in splendid clothes and wore a feather in his cap. The music flowed forth clearly and sweetly. "God save the king!" it sang, and from street and window and house-top the people shouted and waved flags. Hurrah! hurrah!

Weak Job, wiping the tears from his eyes, heard the sound from afar, but he saw no sight save the poor black whom he lifted from the ground. No sight? Yes, at that moment he did. In that quiet street, standing by the black boy, poor Job — weak Job, whom people pitied — saw a grander sight than all the crowd in the brilliant main street.

Well mightst thou stand in dumb awe, holding by the hand the helpless black, poor Job! for in that instant thou didst see with undimmed eyes a pageant such as poor mortals may but whisper, — even the Prince of Life with his attendant angels moving before thee; yes, and on thee did the Prince look with love, and in thy ears did the heavenly choir and the multitudinous voices of gathered saints sing, for of old were the words written, and now thou didst hear them spoken to thyself, —

"*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

"*For whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me.*"

Weak Job, too, had seen the Prince pass.

Horace Scudder.

FANCIES OF CHILD LIFE.

FANCIES OF CHILD LIFE.

THE HEN THAT HATCHED DUCKS.

ONCE there was a nice young hen that we will call Mrs. Feathertop. She was a hen of most excellent family, being a direct descendant of the Bolton Grays, and as pretty a young fowl as you should wish to see of a summer's day. She was, moreover, as fortunately situated in life as it was possible for a hen to be. She was bought by young Master Fred Little John, with four or five family connections of hers, and a lively young cock, who was held to be as brisk a scratcher and as capable a head of a family as any half-dozen sensible hens could desire.

I can't say that at first Mrs. Feathertop was a very sensible hen. She was very pretty and lively, to be sure, and a great favorite with Master Bolton Gray Cock, on account of her bright eyes, her finely shaded feathers, and certain saucy dashing ways that she had, which seemed greatly to take his fancy. But old Mrs. Scratchard, living in the neighboring yard, assured all the neighborhood that Gray Cock was a fool for thinking so much of that flighty young thing, — that she had not the smallest notion how to get on in life, and thought of nothing in the world but her own pretty feathers. "Wait till she comes to have chickens," said Mrs. Scratchard. "Then you will see. I have brought up ten broods myself, — as likely and respectable chickens as ever were a blessing to society, — and I think I ought to know a good hatcher and brooder when I see her; and I know *that* fine piece of trumpery, with her white feathers tipped with gray, never will come down to family life.

She scratch for chickens! Bless me, she never did anything in all her days but run round and eat the worms which somebody else scratched up for her!"

When Master Bolton Gray heard this he crowed very loudly, like a cock of spirit, and declared that old Mrs. Scratchard was envious because she had lost all her own tail-feathers, and looked more like a worn-out old feather-duster than a respectable hen, and that therefore she was filled with sheer envy of anybody that was young and pretty. So young Mrs. Feathertop cackled gay defiance at her busy rubbishy neighbor, as she sunned herself under the bushes on fine June afternoons.

Now Master Fred Little John had been allowed to have these hens by his mamma on the condition that he would build their house himself, and take all the care of it; and, to do Master Fred justice, he executed the job in a small way quite creditably. He chose a sunny sloping bank covered with a thick growth of bushes, and erected there a nice little hen-house, with two glass windows, a little door, and a good pole for his family to roost on. He made, moreover, a row of nice little boxes with hay in them for nests, and he bought three or four little smooth white china eggs to put in them, so that, when his hens *did* lay, he might carry off their eggs without their being missed. The hen-house stood in a little grove that sloped down to a wide river, just where there was a little cove which reached almost to the hen-house.

This situation inspired one of Master Fred's boy advisers with a new scheme in relation to his poultry enterprise. "Hullo! I say, Fred," said Tom Seymour, "you ought to raise ducks, — you 've got a capital place for ducks there."

"Yes,— but I 've bought *hens*, you see," said Freddy; "so it 's no use trying."

"No use! Of course there is! Just as if your hens could n't hatch ducks' eggs. Now you just wait till one of your hens wants to set, and you put ducks' eggs under her, and you 'll have a family of ducks in a twinkling. You can buy ducks' eggs, a plenty, of old Sam under the hill; he always has hens hatch his ducks."

So Freddy thought it would be a good experiment, and informed his mother the next morning that he intended to furnish the ducks for the next Christmas dinner; and when she wondered how he was to come by them, he said, mysteriously, "O, I will show you how!" but did not further explain himself. The next day he went with Tom Seymour, and made a trade with old Sam, and gave him a middle-aged jack-knife for eight of his ducks' eggs. Sam, by the by, was a woolly-headed old negro man, who lived by the pond hard by, and who had long cast envying eyes on Fred's jack-knife, because it was of extra-fine steel, having been a Christmas present the year before. But Fred knew very well there were any number more of jack-knives where that came from, and that, in order to get a new one, he must dispose of the old; so he made the trade and came home rejoicing.

Now about this time Mrs. Feathertop, having laid her eggs daily with great credit to herself, notwithstanding Mrs. Scratchard's predictions, began to find herself suddenly attacked with nervous symptoms. She lost her gay spirits, grew dumpish and morose, stuck up her feathers in a bristling way, and pecked at her neighbors if they did so much as look at her. Master Gray Cock was greatly concerned, and went to old Doctor Peppercorn, who looked solemn, and recommended an infusion of angle-worms, and said he would look in on the patient twice a day till she was better.

"Gracious me, Gray Cock!" said old Goody Kertarkut, who had been lolling at the corner as he passed, "a'n't you a fool? — cocks always are fools. Don't you know what 's the matter with your wife? She wants to set, — that 's all; and you just let her set! A fiddlestick for Doctor Peppercorn! Why, any good old hen that has brought up a family knows more than a doctor about such things. You just go home and tell her to set, if she wants to, and behave herself."

When Gray Cock came home, he found that Master Freddy had been before him, and established Mrs. Feathertop upon eight nice eggs, where she was sitting in gloomy grandeur. He tried to make a little affable conversation with her, and to relate his interview with the Doctor and Goody Kertarkut, but she was morose and sullen, and only pecked at him now and then in a very sharp, unpleasant way; so, after a few more efforts to make himself agreeable, he left her, and went out promenading with the captivating Mrs. Red Comb, a charming young Spanish widow, who had just been imported into the neighboring yard.

"Bless my soul!" said he, "you 've no idea how cross my wife is."

"O you horrid creature!" said Mrs. Red Comb; "how little you feel for the weaknesses of us poor hens!"

"On my word, ma'am," said Gray Cock, "you do me injustice. But when a hen gives way to temper, ma'am, and no longer meets her husband with a smile, — when she even pecks at him whom she is bound to honor and obey — "

"Horrid monster! talking of obedience! I should say, sir, you came straight from Turkey!" And Mrs. Red Comb tossed her head with a most bewitching air, and pretended to run away, and old Mrs. Scratchard looked out of her coop and called to Goody Kertarkut, —

"Look how Mr. Gray Cock is flirting with that widow. I always knew she was a baggage."

"And his poor wife left at home alone," said Goody Kertarkut. "It 's the way with 'em all!"

"Yes, yes," said Dame Scratchard, "she 'll know what real life is now, and she won't go about holding her head so high, and looking down on her practical neighbors that have raised families."

"Poor thing, what 'll she do with a family?" said Goody Kertarkut.

"Well, what business have such young flirts to get married?" said Dame Scratchard. "I don't expect she 'll raise a single chick; and there 's Gray Cock flirting about fine as ever. Folks did n't do so when I was young. I 'm sure my husband knew what treatment a setting hen ought to have, — poor old Long Spur, — he never minded a peck or so now and then. I must say these modern fowls a'n't what fowls used to be."

Meanwhile the sun rose and set, and Master Fred was almost the only friend and associate of poor little Mrs. Feathertop, whom he fed daily with meal and water, and only interrupted her sad reflections by pulling her up occasionally to see how the eggs were coming on.

At last "Peep, peep, peep!" began to be heard in the nest, and one little downy head after another poked forth from under the feathers, surveying the world with round, bright, winking eyes; and gradually the brood was hatched, and Mrs. Feathertop arose, a proud and happy mother, with all the bustling, scratching, caretaking instincts of family life warm within her breast. She clucked and scratched, and cuddled the little downy bits of things as handily and discreetly as a seven-year-old hen could have done, exciting thereby the wonder of the community.

Master Gray Cock came home in high spirits and complimented her; told her she was looking charmingly once more, and said, "Very well, very nice!" as he surveyed the young brood. So that Mrs. Feathertop began to feel the world going well with her, — when suddenly in came Dame Scratchard and Goody Kertarkut to make a morning call.

"Let 's see the chicks," said Dame Scratchard.

"Goodness me," said Goody Kertarkut, "what a likeness to their dear papa!"

"Well, but bless me, what 's the matter with their bills?" said Dame Scratchard. "Why, my dear, these chicks are deformed! I 'm sorry for you, my dear, but it 's all the result of your inexperience; you ought to have eaten pebble-stones with your meal when you were setting. Don't you see, Dame Kertarkut, what bills they have? That 'll increase, and they 'll be frightful!"

"What shall I do?" said Mrs. Feathertop, now greatly alarmed.

"Nothing as I know of," said Dame Scratchard, "since you did n't come to me before you set. I could have told you all about it. Maybe it won't kill 'em, but they 'll always be deformed."

And so the gossips departed, leaving a sting under the pin-feathers of the poor little hen mamma, who began to see that her darlings had curious little spoon-bills different from her own, and to worry and fret about it.

"My dear," she said to her spouse, "do get Doctor Peppercorn to to come in and look at their bills, and see if anything can be done."

Doctor Peppercorn came in, and put on a monstrous pair of spectacles, and said, "Hum! Ha! Extraordinary case, — very singular!"

"Did you ever see anything like it, Doctor?" said both parents. in a breath.

"I 've read of such cases. It 's a calcareous enlargement of the vascular bony tissue, threatening ossification," said the Doctor.

"O, dreadful! — can it be possible?" shrieked both parents. "Can anything be done?"

"Well, I should recommend a daily lotion made of mosquitoes' horns and bicarbonate of frogs' toes, together with a powder, to be taken morning and night, of muriate of fleas. One thing you must be careful about: they must never wet their feet, nor drink any water."

"Dear me, Doctor, I don't know what I *shall* do, for they seem to have a particular fancy for getting into water."

"Yes, a morbid tendency often found in these cases of bony tumification of the vascular tissue of the mouth; but you must resist it, ma'am, as their life depends upon it." And with that Doctor Peppercorn glared gloomily on the young ducks, who were stealthily poking the objectionable little spoon-bills out from under their mother's feathers.

After this poor Mrs. Feathertop led a weary life of it; for the young fry were as healthy and enterprising a brood of young ducks as ever carried saucepans on the end of their noses, and they most utterly set themselves against the doctor's prescriptions, murmured at the muriate of fleas and the bicarbonate of frogs' toes, and took every opportunity to waddle their little ways down to the mud and water which was in their near vicinity. So their bills grew larger and larger, as did the rest of their bodies, and family government grew weaker and weaker.

"You 'll wear me out, children, you certainly will," said poor Mrs. Feathertop.

"You 'll go to destruction, — do ye hear?" said Master Gray Cock.

"Did you ever see such frights as poor Mrs. Feathertop has got?" said Dame Scratchard. "I knew what would come of *her* family, — all deformed, and with a dreadful sort of madness, which makes them love to shovel mud with those shocking spoon-bills of theirs."

"It 's a kind of idiocy," said Goody Kertarkut. "Poor things! they can't be kept from the water, nor made to take powders, and so they get worse and worse."

"I understand it 's affecting their feet so that they can't walk, and a dreadful sort of net is growing between their toes; what a shocking visitation!"

"She brought it on herself," said Dame Scratchard. "Why did n't she come to me before she set? She was always an upstart, self-conceited thing, but I 'm sure I pity her."

Meanwhile the young ducks throve apace. Their necks grew glossy like changeable green and gold satin, and though they would not take the doctor's medicine, and would waddle in the mud and water, — for which they always felt themselves to be very naughty ducks, — yet they grew quite vigorous and hearty. At last one day the whole little tribe waddled off down to the bank of the river. It was a beautiful day, and the river was dancing and dimpling and winking as the little breezes shook the trees that hung over it.

"Well," said the biggest of the little ducks, "in spite of Doctor Peppercorn, I can't help longing for the water. I don't believe it is going to hurt me,— at any rate, here goes." And in he plumped, and in went every duck after him, and they threw out their great brown feet as cleverly as if they had taken rowing lessons all their lives, and sailed off on the river, away, away, among the ferns, under the pink azalias, through reeds and rushes, and arrow-heads and pickerel-weed, the happiest ducks that ever were born; and soon they were quite out of sight.

"Well, Mrs. Feathertop, this is a dispensation," said Mrs. Scratchard. "Your children are all drowned at last, just as I knew they 'd be. The old music-teacher, Master Bullfrog, that lives down in Water-Dock Lane, saw 'em all plump madly into the water together this morning; that 's what comes of not knowing how to bring up a family."

Mrs. Feathertop gave only one shriek and fainted dead away, and was carried home on a cabbage-leaf, and Mr. Gray Cock was sent for, where he was waiting on Mrs. Red Comb through the squash-vines.

"It 's a serious time in your family, sir," said Goody Kertarkut, "and you ought to be at home supporting your wife. Send for Doctor Peppercorn without delay."

Now as the case was a very dreadful one, Doctor Peppercorn called a council from the barn-yard of the Squire, two miles off, and a brisk young Doctor Partlett appeared, in a fine suit of brown and gold, with tail-feathers like meteors. A fine young fellow he was, lately from Paris, with all the modern scientific improvements fresh in his head.

When he had listened to the whole story, he clapped his spur into the ground, and, leaning back, laughed so loud that all the cocks in the neighborhood crowed.

Mrs. Feathertop rose up out of her swoon, and Mr. Gray Cock was greatly enraged.

"What do you mean, sir, by such behavior in the house of mourning?"

"My dear sir, pardon me, — but there is no occasion for mourning. My dear madam, let me congratulate you. There is no harm done. The simple matter is, dear madam, you have been under a hallucination all along. The neighborhood and my learned friend the doctor have all made a mistake in thinking that these children of yours were hens at all. They are ducks, ma'am, evidently ducks, and very finely formed ducks, I dare say."

At this moment a quack was heard, and at a distance the whole tribe were seen coming waddling home, their feathers gleaming in green and gold, and they themselves in high good spirits.

"Such a splendid day as we have had!" they all cried in a breath. "And we know now how to get our own living; we can take care of ourselves in future, so you need have no further trouble with us."

"Madam," said the Doctor, making a bow with an air which displayed his tail-feathers to advantage, "let me congratulate you on the charming family you have raised. A finer brood of young healthy ducks I never saw. Give claw, my dear friend," he said, addressing the elder son. "In our barn-yard no family is more respected than that of the ducks."

And so Madam Feathertop came off glorious at last; and when after this the ducks used to go swimming up and down the river like so many nabobs among the admiring hens, Doctor Peppercorn used to look after them and say, "Ah! I had the care of their infancy!" and Mr. Gray Cock and his wife used to say, "It was our system of education did that!"

Harriet Beecher Stowe.

BLUNDER.

BLUNDER was going to the Wishing-Gate, to wish for a pair of Shetland ponies, and a little coach, like Tom Thumb's. And of course you can have your wish, if you once get there. But the thing is, to find it; for it is not, as you imagine, a great gate, with a tall marble pillar on each side, and a sign over the top, like this, WISHING-GATE, — but just an old stile, made of three sticks. Put up two fingers, cross them on the top with another finger, and you have it exactly, — the way it looks, I mean, — a worm-eaten stile, in a meadow; and as there are plenty of old stiles in meadows, how are you to know which is the one?

Blunder's fairy godmother knew, but then she could not tell him, for that was not according to fairy rules and regulations. She could only direct him to follow the road, and ask the way of the first owl he met; and over and over she charged him, for Blunder was a very careless little boy, and seldom found anything, "Be sure you don't miss him, — be sure you don't pass him by." And so far Blunder had come on very well, for the road was straight; but at the turn it forked. Should he go through the wood, or turn to the right? There was an owl nodding in a tall oak-tree, the first owl Blunder had seen; but he was a little afraid to wake him up, for Blunder's fairy godmother had told him that this was a great philosopher, who sat up all night to study the habits of frogs and mice, and knew everything but what went on in the daylight, under his nose; and he could think of nothing better to say to this great philosopher than "Good Mr. Owl, will you please show me the way to the Wishing-Gate?"

"Eh! what's that?" cried the owl, starting out of his nap. "Have you brought me a frog?"

"No," said Blunder, "I did not know that you would like one. Can you tell me the way to the Wishing-Gate?"

"Wishing-Gate! Wishing-Gate!" hooted the owl, very angry. "Winks and naps! how dare you disturb me for such a thing as that? Do you take me for a mile-stone! Follow your nose, sir, follow your nose!" — and, ruffling up his feathers, the owl was asleep again in a moment.

But how could Blunder follow his nose? His nose would turn to the right, or take him through the woods, whichever way his legs went, and "what was the use of asking the owl," thought Blunder, "if this was all?" While he hesitated, a chipmunk came skurrying down the path, and, seeing Blunder, stopped short with a little squeak.

"Good Mrs. Chipmunk," said Blunder, "can you tell me the way to the Wishing-Gate?"

"I can't, indeed," answered the chipmunk, politely. "What with getting in nuts, and the care of a young family, I have so little time to visit anything! But if you will follow the brook, you will find an old water-sprite under a slanting stone, over which the water pours all day with a noise like wabble! wabble! who, I have no doubt, can tell you all about it. You will know him, for he does nothing but grumble about the good old times when a brook would have dried up before it would have turned a mill-wheel."

So Blunder went on up the brook, and, seeing nothing of the water-sprite, or the slanting stone, was just saying to himself, "I am sure I don't know where he is, — I can't find it," when he spied a frog sitting on a wet stone.

"Mr. Frog," asked Blunder, "can you tell me the way to the Wishing-Gate?"

"I cannot," said the frog. "I am very sorry, but the fact is, I am an artist. Young as I am, my voice is already remarked at our concerts, and I devote myself so entirely to my profession of music, that I have no time to acquire general information. But in a pine-tree beyond, you will find an old crow, who, I am quite sure, can show you the way, as he is a traveller, and a bird of an inquiring turn of mind."

"I don't know where the pine is, — I am sure I can never find him," answered Blunder, discontentedly; but still he went on up the brook, till, hot and tired, and out of patience at seeing neither crow nor pine, he sat down under a great tree to rest. There he heard tiny voices squabbling.

"Get out! Go away, I tell you! It has been knock! knock! knock! at my door all day, till I am tired out. First a wasp, and then a bee, and then another wasp, and then another bee, and now *you*. Go away! I won't let another one in to-day"

"But I want my honey."

"And I want my nap."

"I will come in."

"You shall not."

"You are a miserly old elf."

"And you are a brute of a bee."

And looking about him, Blunder spied a bee, quarrelling with a morning-glory elf, who was shutting up the morning-glory in his face.

"Elf, do you know which is the way to the Wishing-Gate?" asked Blunder.

"No," said the elf, "I don't know anything about geography. I was always too delicate to study. But if you will keep on in this path, you will meet the Dream-man, coming down from fairy-land, with his bags of dreams on his shoulder; and if anybody can tell you about the Wishing-Gate, he can."

"But how can I find him?" asked Blunder, more and more impatient.

"I don't know, I am sure," answered the elf, "unless you should look for him."

So there was no help for it but to go on; and presently Blunder passed the Dream-man, asleep under a witch-hazel, with his bags of good and bad dreams laid over him to keep him from fluttering away. But Blunder had a habit of not using his eyes; for at home, when told to find anything, he always said, "I don't know where it is," or, "I can't find it," and then his mother or sister went straight and found it for him. So he passed the Dream-man without seeing him, and went on till he stumbled on Jack-o'-Lantern.

"Can you show me the way to the Wishing-Gate?" said Blunder.

"Certainly, with pleasure," answered Jack, and, catching up his lantern, set out at once.

Blunder followed close, but, in watching the lantern, he forgot to look to his feet, and fell into a hole filled with black mud.

"I say! the Wishing-Gate is not down there," called out Jack, whisking off among the tree-tops.

"But I can't come up there," whimpered Blunder.

"That is not my fault, then," answered Jack, merrily, dancing out of sight.

O, a very angry little boy was Blunder, when he clambered out of the hole. "I don't know where it is," he said, crying; "I can't find it, and I 'll go straight home."

Just then he stepped on an old, moss-grown, rotten stump; and it happening, unluckily, that this rotten stump was a wood-goblin's chimney, Blunder fell through, headlong, in among the pots and pans, in which the goblin's cook was cooking the goblin's supper. The old goblin, who was asleep up stairs, started up in a fright at the tremendous clash and clatter, and, finding that his house was not tumbling about his ears, as he thought at first, stumped down to the kitchen to see what was the matter. The cook heard him coming, and looked about her in a fright to hide Blunder.

"Quick!" cried she. "If my master catches you, he will have you in a pie. In the next room stands a pair of shoes. Jump into them, and they will take you up the chimney."

Off flew Blunder, burst open the door, and tore frantically about the room, in one corner of which stood the shoes; but of course he could not see them, because he was not in the habit of using his eyes. "I can't find them! O, I can't find them!" sobbed poor little Blunder, running back to the cook.

"Run into the closet," said the cook.

Blunder made a dash at the window, but — "I don't know where it is," he called out.

Clump! clump! That was the goblin, half-way down the stairs.

"Goodness gracious mercy me!" exclaimed cook. "He is coming. The boy will be eaten in spite of me. Jump into the meal-chest."

"I don't see it," squeaked Blunder, rushing towards the fireplace. "Where is it?"

Clump! clump! That was the goblin at the foot of the stairs, and coming towards the kitchen door.

"There is an invisible cloak hanging on that peg. Get into that," cried cook, quite beside herself.

But Blunder could no more see the cloak than he could see the shoes, the closet, and the meal-chest; and no doubt the goblin, whose hand was on the latch, would have found him prancing around the kitchen, and crying out, "I can't find it," but, fortunately for himself, Blunder caught his foot in the invisible cloak, and tumbled down, pulling the cloak over him. There he lay, hardly daring to breathe.

"What was all that noise about?" asked the goblin, gruffly, coming into the kitchen.

"Only my pans, master," answered the cook; and as he could see nothing amiss, the old goblin went grumbling up stairs again, while the shoes took Blunder up chimney, and landed him in a meadow, safe enough, but so miserable! He was cross, he was disappointed, he was hungry. It was dark, he did not know the way home, and, seeing an old stile, he climbed up, and sat down on the top of it, for he was too tired to stir. Just then came along the South Wind, with his pockets crammed full of showers, and, as he happened to be going Blunder's way, he took Blunder home; of which the boy was glad enough, only he would have liked it better if the Wind would not have laughed all the way. For what would you think, if you were walking along a road with a fat old gentleman, who went chuckling to himself, and slapping his knees, and poking himself, till he was purple in the face, when he would burst out in a great windy roar of laughter every other minute?

"What *are* you laughing at?" asked Blunder, at last.

"At two things that I saw in my travels," answered the Wind; —"a hen, that died of starvation, sitting on an empty peck-measure that stood in front of a bushel of grain; and a little boy who sat on the top of the Wishing-Gate, and came home because he could not find it."

"What? what 's that?" cried Blunder; but just then he found himself at home. There sat his fairy godmother by the fire, her mouse-skin cloak hung up on a peg, and toeing off a spider's-silk stocking an eighth of an inch long; and though everybody else cried, "What luck?" and, "Where is the Wishing-Gate?" she sat mum.

" I don't know where it is," answered Blunder. " I could n't find it " ; — and thereon told the story of his troubles.

" Poor boy ! " said his mother, kissing him, while his sister ran to bring him some bread and milk.

" Yes, that is all very fine," cried his godmother, pulling out her needles, and rolling up her ball of silk ; " but now hear my story. There was once a little boy who must needs go to the Wishing-Gate, and his fairy godmother showed him the road as far as the turn, and told him to ask the first owl he met what to do then ; but this little boy seldom used his eyes, so he passed the first owl, and waked up the wrong owl ; so he passed the water-sprite, and found only a frog ; so he sat down under the pine-tree, and never saw the crow ; so he passed the Dream-man, and ran after Jack-o'-Lantern ; so he tumbled down the goblin's chimney, and could n't find the shoes and the closet and the chest and the cloak ; and so he sat on the top of the Wishing-Gate till the South Wind brought him home, and never knew it. Ugh ! Bah ! " And away went the fairy godmother up the chimney, in such deep disgust that she did not even stop for her mouse-skin cloak.

Louise E. Chollet.

STAR–DOLLARS.

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl whose father and mother were dead; and she became so poor that she had no roof to shelter herself under, and no bed to sleep in; and at last she had nothing left but the clothes on her back, and a loaf of bread in her hand, which a compassionate person had given to her.

But she was a good and pious little girl, and when she found herself forsaken by all the world, she went out into the fields, trusting in God.

Soon she met a poor man, who said to her, "Give me something to eat, for I am so hungry!" She handed him the whole loaf, and with a "God bless you!" walked on farther.

Next she met a little girl crying very much, who said to her, "Pray give me something to cover my head with, for it is so cold!" So she took off her own bonnet, and gave it away.

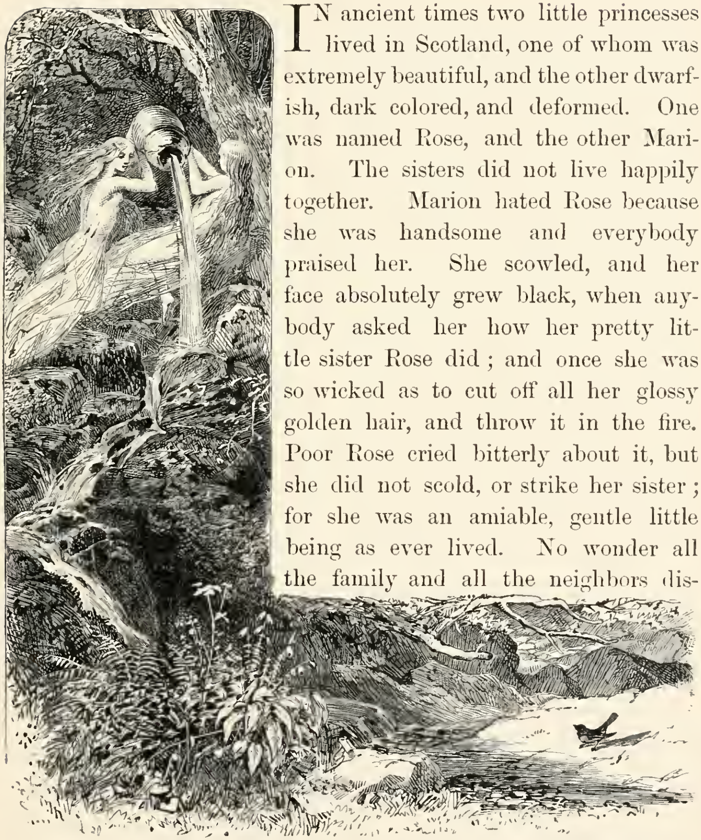
And in a little while she met another child who had no cloak, and to her she gave her own cloak! Then she met another who had no dress on, and to this one she gave her own frock.

By that time it was growing dark, and our little girl entered a forest; and presently she met a fourth maiden, who begged something, and to her she gave her petticoat. "For," thought our heroine, "it is growing dark, and nobody will see me; I can give away this."

And now she had scarcely anything left to cover herself. But just then some of the stars fell down in the form of silver dollars, and among them she found a petticoat of the finest linen! And in that she collected the star-money, which made her rich all the rest of her lifetime.

Grimm's Household Tales.

THE IMMORTAL FOUNTAIN.



IN ancient times two little princesses lived in Scotland, one of whom was extremely beautiful, and the other dwarfish, dark colored, and deformed. One was named Rose, and the other Marion. The sisters did not live happily together. Marion hated Rose because she was handsome and everybody praised her. She scowled, and her face absolutely grew black, when anybody asked her how her pretty little sister Rose did; and once she was so wicked as to cut off all her glossy golden hair, and throw it in the fire. Poor Rose cried bitterly about it, but she did not scold, or strike her sister; for she was an amiable, gentle little being as ever lived. No wonder all the family and all the neighbors dis-liked Marion, and no wonder her face grew uglier and uglier every day. The Scotch used to be a very superstitious people; and they believed the infant Rose had been blessed by the Fairies, to whom she owed her extraordinary beauty and exceeding goodness.

Not far from the castle where the princesses resided was a deep grotto, said to lead to the Palace of Beauty, where the queen of the Fairies held her court. Some said Rose had fallen asleep there one day, when she had grown tired of chasing a butterfly, and that the queen had dipped her in an immortal fountain, from which she had risen with the beauty of an angel.* Marion often asked questions about this story; but Rose always replied that she had been forbidden to speak of it. When she saw any uncommonly brilliant bird or butterfly, she would sometimes exclaim, "O, how much that looks like Fairy Land!" But when asked what she knew about Fairy Land she blushed, and would not answer.

Marion thought a great deal about this. "Why cannot I go to the Palace of Beauty?" thought she; "and why may not I bathe in the Immortal Fountain?"

One summer's noon, when all was still save the faint twittering of the birds and the lazy hum of the insects, Marion entered the deep grotto. She sat down on a bank of moss; the air around her was as fragrant as if it came from a bed of violets; and with the sound of far-off music dying on her ear, she fell into a gentle slumber. When she awoke, it was evening; and she found herself in a small hall, where opal pillars supported a rainbow roof, the bright reflection of which rested on crystal walls, and a golden floor inlaid with pearls. All around, between the opal pillars, stood the tiniest vases of pure alabaster, in which grew a multitude of brilliant and fragrant flowers; some of them, twining around the pillars, were lost in the floating rainbow above. The whole of this scene of beauty was lighted by millions of fire-flies, glittering about like wandering stars. While Marion was wondering at all this, a little figure of rare loveliness stood before her. Her robe was of green and gold; her flowing gossamer mantle was caught upon one shoulder with a pearl, and in her hair was a solitary star, composed of five diamonds, each no bigger than a pin's point, and thus she sung: —

---

* There was a superstition that whoever slept on fairy ground was carried away by the fairies.

The Fairy Queen
Hath rarely seen
Creature of earthly mould
Within her door,
On pearly floor,
Inlaid with shining gold.
Mortal, all thou seest is fair;
Quick thy purposes declare!

As she concluded, the song was taken up, and thrice repeated by a multitude of soft voices in the distance. It seemed as if birds and insects joined in the chorus, — the clear voice of the thrush was distinctly heard; the cricket kept time with his tiny cymbal; and ever and anon, between the pauses, the sound of a distant cascade was heard, whose waters fell in music.

All these delightful sounds died away, and the Queen of the Fairies stood patiently awaiting Marion's answer. Courtesying low, and with a trembling voice, the little maiden said, —

"Will it please your Majesty to make me as handsome as my sister Rose."

The queen smiled. "I will grant your request," said she, "if you will promise to fulfil all the conditions I propose."

Marion eagerly promised that she would.

"The Immortal Fountain," replied the queen, "is on the top of a high, steep hill; at four different places Fairies are stationed around it, who guard it with their wands. None can pass them except those who obey my orders. Go home now: for one week speak no ungentle word to your sister; at the end of that time come again to the grotto."

Marion went home light of heart. Rose was in the garden, watering the flowers; and the first thing Marion observed was that her sister's sunny hair had suddenly grown as long and beautiful as it had ever been. The sight made her angry ; and she was just about to snatch the water-pot from her hand with an angry expression, when she remembered the Fairy, and passed into the castle in silence.

The end of the week arrived, and Marion had faithfully kept her promise. Again she went to the grotto. The queen was feasting when she entered the hall. The bees brought honeycomb and deposited it on the small rose-colored shells which adorned the crystal table ; gaudy butterflies floated about the head of the queen, and fanned her with their wings ; the cucullo, and the lantern-fly stood at her side to afford her light ; a large diamond beetle formed her splendid footstool, and when she had supped, a dew-drop, on the petal of a violet, was brought for her royal fingers.

When Marion entered, the diamond sparkles on the wings of the Fairies faded, as they always did in the presence of anything not perfectly good ; and in a few moments all the queen's attendants vanished, singing as they went : —

The Fairy Queen
Hath rarely seen
Creature of earthly mould
Within her door,
On pearly floor,
Inlaid with shining gold.

"Mortal, hast thou fulfilled thy promise ?" asked the queen.

"I have," replied the maiden.

"Then follow me."

Marion did as she was directed, and away they went over beds of violets and mignonette. The birds warbled above their heads, butterflies cooled the air, and the gurgling of many fountains came with a refreshing sound. Presently they came to the hill, on the top of which was the Immortal Fountain. Its foot was surrounded by a band of Fairies, clothed in green gossamer, with their ivory wands crossed, to bar the ascent. The queen waved her wand over them, and immediately they stretched their thin wings and flew away. The hill was steep, and far, far up they went; and the air became more and more fragrant, and more and more distinctly they heard the sound of waters falling in music. At length they were stopped by a band of Fairies clothed in blue, with their silver wands crossed.

"Here," said the queen, "our journey must end. You can go no farther until you have fulfilled the orders I shall give you. Go home now; for one month do by your sister in all respects as you would wish her to do by you, were you Rose and she Marion."

Marion promised, and departed. She found the task harder than the first had been. She could not help speaking; but when Rose asked her for any of her playthings, she found it difficult to give them gently and affectionately, instead of pushing them along. When Rose talked to her, she wanted to go away in silence; and when a pocket-mirror was found in her sister's room, broken into a thousand pieces, she felt sorely tempted to conceal that she did the mischief. But she was so anxious to be made beautiful, that she did as she would be done by.

All the household remarked how Marion had changed. "I love her dearly," said Rose, "she is so good and amiable."

"So do I," said a dozen voices.

Marion blushed deeply, and her eyes sparkled with pleasure. "How pleasant it is to be loved!" thought she.

At the end of the month, she went to the grotto. The Fairies in blue lowered their silver wands and flew away. They travelled on; the path grew steeper and steeper; but the fragrance of the atmosphere was redoubled, and more distinctly came the sound of the waters falling in music. Their course was stayed by a troop of Fairies in rainbow robes, and silver wands tipped with gold. In face and form they were far more beautiful than anything Marion had yet seen.

"Here we must pause," said the queen; "this boundary you cannot yet pass."

"Why not?" asked the impatient Marion.

New York Public Library
MELROSE BRANCH
910 MORRIS AVENUE
CIRCULATING DEPARTMENT

"Because those must be very pure who pass the rainbow Fairies," replied the queen.

"Am I not very pure?" said the maiden; "all the folks in the castle tell me how good I have grown."

"Mortal eyes see only the outside," answered the queen, "but those who pass the rainbow Fairies must be pure in thought, as well as in action. Return home; for three months never indulge an envious or wicked thought. You shall then have a sight of the Immortal Fountain." Marion was sad at heart; for she knew how many envious thoughts and wrong wishes she had suffered to gain power over her.

At the end of three months, she again visited the Palace of Beauty. The queen did not smile when she saw her; but in silence led the way to the Immortal Fountain. The green Fairies and the blue Fairies flew away as they approached; but the rainbow Fairies bowed low to the queen, and kept their gold-tipped wands firmly crossed. Marion saw that the silver specks on their wings grew dim; and she burst into tears. "I knew," said the queen, "that you could not pass this boundary. Envy has been in your heart, and you have not driven it away. Your sister has been ill, and in your heart you wished that she might die, or rise from the bed of sickness deprived of her beauty. Be not discouraged; you have been several years indulging in wrong feelings, and you must not wonder that it takes many months to drive them away."

Marion was very sad as she wended her way homeward. When Rose asked her what was the matter, she told her she wanted to be very good, but she could not. "When I want to be good, I read my Bible and pray," said Rose; "and I find God helps me to be good." Then Marion prayed that God would help her to be pure in thought; and when wicked feelings rose in her heart, she read her Bible, and they went away.

When she again visited the Palace of Beauty, the queen smiled, and touched her playfully with the wand, then led her away to the Immortal Fountain. The silver specks on the wings of the rainbow Fairies shone bright as she approached them, and they lowered their wands, and sung, as they flew away: —

Mortal, pass on,
Till the goal is won, —
For such, I ween,
Is the will of the queen, —
Pass on! pass on!

And now every footstep was on flowers, that yielded beneath their feet, as if their pathway had been upon a cloud. The delicious fragrance could almost be felt, yet it did not oppress the senses with its heaviness; and loud, clear, and liquid came the sound of the waters as they fell in music. And now the cascade is seen leaping and sparkling over crystal rocks; a rainbow arch rests above it, like a perpetual halo; the spray falls in pearls, and forms fantastic foliage about the margin of the Fountain. It has touched the webs woven among the grass, and they have become pearl-embroidered cloaks for the Fairy queen. Deep and silent, below the foam, is the Immortal Fountain! Its amber-colored waves flow over a golden bed; and as the Fairies bathe in it, the diamonds on their hair glance like sunbeams on the waters.

"O, let me bathe in the fountain!" cried Marion, clasping her hands in delight. "Not yet," said the queen. "Behold the purple Fairies with golden wands that guard its brink!" Marion looked, and saw beings lovelier than any her eye had ever rested on. "You cannot pass them yet," said the queen. "Go home; for one year drive away all evil feelings, not for the sake of bathing in this Fountain, but because goodness is lovely and desirable for its own sake. Purify the inward motive, and your work is done."

This was the hardest task of all. For she had been willing to be good, not because it was right to be good, but because she wished to be beautiful. Three times she sought the grotto, and three times she left in tears; for the golden specks grew dim at her approach, and the golden wands were still crossed, to shut her from the Immortal Fountain. The fourth time she prevailed. The purple Fairies lowered their wands, singing, —

Thou hast scaled the mountain,
Go, bathe in the Fountain;
Rise fair to the sight
As an angel of light;
Go, bathe in the Fountain!

Marion was about to plunge in, but the queen touched her, saying, "Look in the mirror of the waters. Art thou not already as beautiful as heart can wish?"

Marion looked at herself, and saw that her eye sparkled with new lustre, that a bright color shone through her cheeks, and dimples played sweetly about her mouth. "I have not touched the Immortal Fountain," said she, turning in surprise to the queen. "True," replied the queen, "but its waters have been within your soul. Know that a pure heart and a clear conscience are the only immortal fountains of beauty."

When Marion returned, Rose clasped her to her bosom, and kissed her fervently. "I know all," said she, "though I have not asked you a question. I have been in Fairy Land, disguised as a bird, and I have watched all your steps. When you first went to the grotto, I begged the queen to grant your wish."

Ever after that the sisters lived lovingly together. It was the remark of every one, "How handsome Marion has grown! The ugly scowl has departed from her face; and the light of her eye is so mild and pleasant, and her mouth looks so smiling and good-natured, that to my taste, I declare, she is as handsome as Rose."

L. Maria Child.

THE BIRD'S-NEST IN THE MOON.

I LOVE to go to the Moon. I never shake off sublunary cares and sorrows so completely as when I am fairly landed on that beautiful island.* A man in the Moon may see Castle Island, the city of Boston, the ships in the harbor, the silver waters of our little archipelago, all lying, as it were, at his feet. There you may be at once social and solitary, — social, because you see the busy world before you; and solitary because there is not a single creature on the island, except a few feeding cows, to disturb your repose.

I was there last summer, and was surveying the scene with my usual emotions, when my attention was attracted by the whirring wings of a little sparrow, that, in walking, I had frightened from her nest.

This bird, as is well known, always builds its nest on the ground. I have seen one, often, in the middle of a cornhill, curiously placed in the centre of the five green stalks, so that it was difficult, at hoeing time, to dress the hill without burying the nest.

This sparrow had built hers beneath a little tuft of grass more rich and thickset than the rest of the herbage around it. I cast a careless glance at the nest, saw the soft down that lined it, the four little speckled eggs which enclosed the parents' hope. I marked the multitude of cows that were feeding around it, one tread of whose cloven feet would crush both bird and progeny into ruin.

I could not but reflect on the dangerous condition to which the creature had committed her most tender hopes. A cow is seeking a bite of grass; she steps aside to gratify that appetite; she treads on the nest, and destroys the offspring of the defenceless bird.

---

* Moon Island, in Boston harbor.

As I came away from the island, I reflected that this bird's situation, in her humble, defenceless nest, might be no unapt emblem of man in this precarious world. What are diseases, in their countless forms, accidents by flood and fire, the seductions of temptation, and even some human beings themselves, but so many huge cows feeding around our nest, and ready, every moment, to crush our dearest hopes, with the most careless indifference, beneath their brutal tread?

Sometimes, as we sit at home, we can see the calamity coming at a distance. We hear the breathing of the monster; we mark its great wavering path, now looking towards us in a direct line, now capriciously turning for a moment aside. We see the swing of its dreadful horns, the savage rapacity of its brutal appetite; we behold it approaching nearer and nearer, and it passes within a hairbreadth of our ruin, leaving us to the sad reflection that another and another are still behind.

Poor bird! Our situations are exactly alike.

The other evening I walked into the chamber where my children were sleeping. There was Willie, with the clothes half kicked down, his hands thrown carelessly over his head, tired with play, now resting in repose; there was Jamie with his balmy breath and rosy cheeks, sleeping and looking like innocence itself. There was Bessie, who has just begun to prattle, and runs daily with tottering steps and lisping voice to ask her father to toss her into the air.

As I looked upon these sleeping innocents, I could not but regard them as so many little birds which I must fold under my wing, and protect, if possible, in security in my nest.

But when I thought of the huge cows that were feeding around them, the ugly hoofs that might crush them into ruin, in short, when I remembered *the bird's-nest in the Moon*, I trembled and wept.

But why weep? Is there not a special providence in the fall of a sparrow?

It is very possible that the nest which I saw was not in so dangerous a situation as it appeared to be. Perhaps some providential instinct led the bird to build her fragile house in the ranker grass, which the kine never bite, and, of course, on which they would not be likely to tread. Perhaps some kind impulse may guide that species so as not to tread even on a bird's-nest.

There is a merciful God, whose care and protection extend over all his works, who takes care of the sparrow's children and of mine. *The very hairs of our head are all numbered.*

New England Magazine.

DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERY.

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene —so, at least, it was generally believed in that part of the country— of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts! till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. — Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding.

Then I went on to say how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet, in some respects, she might be said to be the mistress of it too), committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the

Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room.

Here John smiled, as much as to say, "That would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry, too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good, indeed, that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides.—Here little Alice spread her hands.

Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer,—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till, upon my looking grave, it desisted,—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious.

Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm"; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she,—and yet I never saw the infants.—Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous.

Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out, — sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me, — and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then, — and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir-apples, which were good for nothing but to look at, — or in lying about upon the fresh grass with all the fine garden smells around me, —

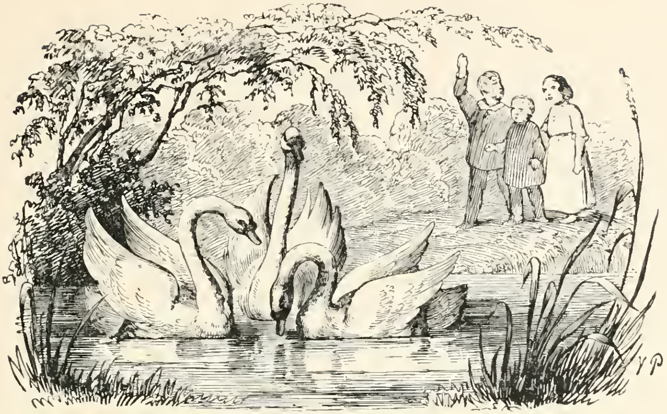
or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too, along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth, — or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings; I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such-like common baits of children. — Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant.

Then, in a somewhat more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out; and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries; and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back, when I was a lame-footed boy, — for he was a good bit older than me, — many a mile, when I could not walk for pain; and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death, as I thought, pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him as he their poor uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb.

Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for their Uncle John; and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother.

Then I told how, for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens, — when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of representment that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence and a name"; — and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side, — but John L—— (or James Elia) was gone forever.

Charles Lamb.



THE UGLY DUCKLING.

IT was beautiful in the country; it was summer-time; the wheat was yellow; the oats were green, the hay was stacked up in the green meadows, and the stork paraded about on his long red legs, discoursing in Egyptian, which language he had learned from his mother. The fields and meadows were skirted by thick woods, and a deep lake lay in the midst of the woods. Yes, it was indeed beautiful in the country! The sunshine fell warmly on an old mansion, surrounded by deep canals, and from the walls down to the water's edge there grew large burdock-leaves, so high that children could stand upright among them without being perceived. This place was as wild and unfrequented as the thickest part of the wood, and on that account a duck had chosen to make her nest there. She was sitting on her eggs; but the pleasure she had felt at first was now almost gone, because she had been there so long, and had so few visitors, for the other ducks preferred swimming on the canals to sitting among the burdock-leaves gossiping with her.

At last the eggs cracked, one after another, "Tchick! tchick!" All the eggs were alive, and one little head after another peered forth. "Quack, quack!" said the Duck, and all got up as well as they could; they peeped about from under the green leaves; and as green is good for the eyes, the mother let them look as long as they pleased.

"How large the world is!" said the little ones, for they found their present situation very different from their former confined one, while yet in the egg-shells.

"Do you imagine this to be the whole of the world?" said the mother; "it extends far beyond the other side of the garden to the pastor's field; but I have never been there. Are you all here?" And then she got up. "No, not all, but the largest egg is still here. How long will this last? I am so weary of it!" And then she sat down again.

"Well, and how are you getting on?" asked an old Duck, who had come to pay her a visit.

"This one egg keeps me so long!" said the mother, "it will not break. But you should see the others! they are the prettiest little ducklings I have seen in all my days; they are all like their father, — the good-for-nothing fellow, he has not been to visit me once!"

"Let me see the egg that will not break!" said the old Duck; "depend upon it, it is a turkey's egg. I was cheated in the same way once myself, and I had such trouble with the young ones; for they were afraid of the water, and I could not get them there. I called and scolded, but it was all of no use. But let me see the egg. Ah, yes! to be sure, that is a turkey's egg. Leave it, and teach the other little ones to swim."

"I will sit on it a little longer," said the Duck. "I have been sitting so long that I may as well spend the harvest here."

"It is no business of mine," said the old Duck, and away she waddled.

The great egg burst at last. "Tchick! tchick!" said the little one, and out it tumbled; but O, how large and ugly it was! The Duck looked at it. "That is a great, strong creature," said she; "none of the others are at all like it. Can it be a young turkey-cock ? Well, we shall soon find out ; it must go into the water, though I push it in myself."

The next day there was delightful weather, and the sun shone warmly upon the green leaves when Mother Duck with all her family went down to the canal ; plump she went into the water. "Quack, quack !" cried she, and one duckling after another jumped in. The water closed over their heads, but all came up again, and swam together in the pleasantest manner ; their legs moved without effort. All were there, even the ugly, gray one.

"No ! it is not a turkey," said the old Duck ; "only see how prettily it moves its legs ! how upright it hold itself ! it is my own child : it is also really very pretty, when one looks more closely at it. Quack ! quack ! now come with me, I will take you into the world, introduce you in the duck-yard ; but keep close to me, or some one may tread on you ; and beware of the cat."

So they came into the duck-yard. There was a horrid noise ; two families were quarrelling about the remains of an eel, which in the end was secured by the cat.

"See, my children, such is the way of the world," said the Mother Duck, wiping her beak, for she, too, was fond of eels. "Now use your legs," said she ; "keep together, and bow to the old duck you see yonder. She is the most distinguished of all the fowls present, and is of Spanish blood, which accounts for her dignified appearance and manners. And look, she has a red rag on her leg ! that is considered extremely handsome, and is the greatest distinction a duck can have. Don't turn your feet inwards ; a well-educated duckling always keeps his legs far apart, like his father and mother, just so, — look ! now bow your necks, and say, 'quack.'"

And they did as they were told. But the other ducks who were in the yard looked at them, and said aloud, "Only see ! now we have another brood,—as if there were not enough of us already ; and fie ! how ugly that one is ! we will not endure it." And immediately one of the ducks flew at him, and bit him in the neck.

"Leave him alone," said the mother ; "he is doing no one any harm."

"Yes, but he is so large, and so strange-looking, and therefore he shall be teased."

"These are fine children that our good mother has," said the old Duck with the red rag on her leg. "All are pretty except one, and that has not turned out well; I almost wish it could be hatched over again."

"That cannot be, please your highness," said the mother. "Certainly he is not handsome, but he is a very good child, and swims as well as the others, indeed rather better. I think he will grow like the others all in good time, and perhaps will look smaller. He stayed so long in the egg-shell, that is the cause of the difference"; and she scratched the Duckling's neck, and stroked his whole body. "Besides," added she, "he is a drake; I think he will be very strong, therefore it does not matter so much; he will fight his way through."

"The other ducks are very pretty," said the old Duck. "Pray make yourselves at home, and if you find an eel's head you can bring it to me."

And accordingly they made themselves at home.

But the poor little Duckling who had come last out of its egg-shell, and who was so ugly, was bitten, pecked, and teased by both Ducks and Hens. "It is so large!" said they all. And the Turkey-cock, who had come into the world with spurs on, and therefore fancied he was an emperor, puffed himself up like a ship in full sail, and marched up to the Duckling quite red with passion. The poor little thing scarcely knew what to do; he was quite distressed because he was so ugly, and because he was the jest of the poultry-yard.

So passed the first day, and afterwards matters grew worse and worse; the poor Duckling was scorned by all. Even his brothers and sisters behaved unkindly, and were constantly saying, "The cat fetch thee, thou nasty creature!" The mother said, "Ah, if thou wert only far away!" The Ducks bit him, the Hens pecked him, and the girl who fed the poultry kicked him. He ran over the hedge; the little birds in the bushes were terrified. "That is because I am so ugly," thought the Duckling, shutting his eyes, but he ran on. At last he came to a wide moor, where lived some Wild Ducks; here he lay the whole night, so tired and so comfortless. In the morning the Wild Ducks flew up, and perceived their new companion. "Pray, who are you?" asked they; and our little Duckling turned himself in all directions, and greeted them as politely as possible.

"You are really uncommonly ugly!" said the Wild Ducks; "however, that does not matter to us, provided you do not marry into our families." Poor thing! he had never thought of marrying; he only begged permission to lie among the reeds and drink the water of the moor.

There he lay for two whole days; on the third day there came two Wild Geese, or rather Ganders, who had not been long out of their egg-shells, which accounts for their impertinence.

"Hark ye!" said they, "you are so ugly that we like you infinitely well; will you come with us, and be a bird of passage? On another moor, not far from this, are some dear, sweet Wild Geese, as lovely creatures as have ever said 'hiss, hiss.' You are truly in the way to make your fortune, ugly as you are."

Bang! a gun went off all at once, and both Wild Geese were stretched dead among the reeds; the water became red with blood; bang! a gun went off again; whole flocks of wild geese flew up from among the reeds, and another report followed.

There was a grand hunting party; the hunters lay in ambush all around; some were even sitting in the trees, whose huge branches stretched far over the moor. The blue smoke rose through the thick trees like a mist, and was dispersed as it fell over the water; the hounds splashed about in the mud, the reeds and rushes bent in all directions; how frightened the poor little Duck was! he turned his head, thinking to hide it under his wings, and in a moment a most formidable-looking dog stood close to him, his tongue hanging out of his mouth, his eyes sparkling fearfully. He opened wide his jaws at the sight of our Duckling, showed him his sharp white teeth, and splash, splash! he was gone, — gone without hurting him.

"Well! let me be thankful," sighed he; "I am so ugly that even the dog will not eat me."

And now he lay still, though the shooting continued among the reeds, shot following shot.

The noise did not cease till late in the day, and even then the poor little thing dared not stir; he waited several hours before he looked around him, and then hastened away from the moor as fast as he could; he ran over fields and meadows, though the wind was so high that he had some difficulty in proceeding.

Towards evening he reached a wretched little hut, so wretched that it knew not on which side to fall, and therefore remained standing. The wind blew violently, so that our poor little Duckling was obliged to support himself on his tail, in order to stand against it; but it became worse and worse. He then remarked that the door had lost one of its hinges, and hung so much awry that he could creep through the crevice into the room, which he did.

In this room lived an old woman, with her Tom-cat and her Hen; and the Cat, whom she called her little son, knew how to set up his back and purr; indeed, he could even emit sparks when stroked the wrong way. The Hen had very short legs, and was therefore called "Cuckoo Short-legs"; she laid very good eggs, and the old woman loved her as her own child.

The next morning the new guest was perceived. The Cat began to mew and the Hen to cackle.

"What is the matter?" asked the old woman, looking round; however, her eyes were not good, so she took the young Duckling to be a fat Duck who had lost her way. "This is a capital catch," said she; "I shall now have ducks' eggs, if it be not a drake: we must try."

And so the Duckling was put to the proof for three weeks, but no eggs made their appearance.

Now the Cat was the master of the house, and the Hen was the mistress, and they used always to say, "We and the world," for they imagined themselves to be not only the half of the world, but also by far the better half. The Duckling thought it was possible to be of a different opinion, but that the Hen would not allow.

"Can you lay eggs?" asked she.

"No."

"Well, then, hold your tongue."

And the Cat said, "Can you set up your back? can you purr?"

"No."

"Well, then, you should have no opinion when reasonable persons are speaking."

So the Duckling sat alone in a corner, and was in a very bad humor; however, he happened to think of the fresh air and bright sunshine, and these thoughts gave him such a strong desire to swim again, that he could not help telling it to the Hen.

"What ails you?" said the Hen. "You have nothing to do, and therefore brood over these fancies; either lay eggs or purr, then you will forget them."

"But it is so delicious to swim!" said the Duckling; "so delicious when the waters close over your head, and you plunge to the bottom!"

"Well, that is a queer sort of pleasure," said the Hen; "I think you must be crazy. Not to speak of myself, ask the Cat — he is the most sensible animal I know — whether he would like to swim, or to plunge to the bottom of the water. Ask our mistress, the old woman, — there is no one in the world wiser than she; do you think she would take pleasure in swimming, and in the waters closing over her head?"

"You do not understand me," said the Duckling.

"What, we do not understand you! So you think yourself wiser than the Cat and the old woman, not to speak of myself. Do not fancy any such thing, child, but be thankful for all the kindness that has been shown you. Are you not lodged in a warm room, and have you not the advantage of society from which you can learn something? But you are a simpleton, and it is wearisome to have anything to do with you. Believe me, I wish you well. I tell you unpleasant truths, but it is thus that real friendship is shown. Come, for once give yourself the trouble to learn to purr, or to lay eggs."

"I think I will go out into the wide world again," said the Duckling.

"Well, go," answered the Hen.

So the Duckling went. He swam on the surface of the water, he plunged beneath, but all animals passed him by on account of his ugliness. And the autumn came, the leaves turned yellow and brown, the wind caught them and danced them about, the air was very cold, the clouds were heavy with hail or snow, and the raven sat on the hedge and croaked, the poor Duckling was certainly not very comfortable!

One evening, just as the sun was setting with unusual brilliancy, a flock of large, beautiful birds rose from out the brushwood; the Duckling had never seen anything so beautiful before; their plumage was of a dazzling white, and they had long slender necks. They were swans; they uttered a singular cry, spread out their long, splendid wings, and flew away from these cold regions to warmer countries, across the open sea. They flew so high, so very high! and the little Ugly Duckling's feelings were so strange; he turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, strained his neck to look after them, and sent forth such a loud and strange cry that it almost frightened himself. Ah! he could not forget them, those noble birds! those happy birds! When he could see them no longer, he plunged to the bottom of the water, and when he rose again was almost beside himself. The Duckling knew not what the birds were called, knew not whither they were flying, yet he loved them as he had never before loved anything; he envied them not, it would never have occurred to him to wish such beauty for himself; he would have been quite contented if the ducks in the duck-yard had but endured his company, — the poor, ugly animal!

And the winter was so cold, so cold! The Duckling was obliged to swim round and round in the water, to keep it from freezing; but every night the opening in which he swam became smaller and smaller; it froze so that the crust of ice crackled; the Duckling was obliged to make good use of his legs to prevent the water from freezing entirely; at last, wearied out, he lay stiff and cold in the ice.

Early in the morning there passed by a peasant, who saw him, broke the ice in pieces with his wooden shoe, and brought him home to his wife.

He now revived; the children would have played with him, but our Duckling thought they wished to tease him, and in his terror jumped into the milk-pail, so that the milk was spilled about the room; the good woman screamed and clapped her hands; he flew thence into the pan where the butter was kept, and thence into the meal-barrel, and out again, and then how strange he looked!

The woman screamed, and struck at him with the tongs, the children ran races with each other trying to catch him, and laughed and screamed likewise. It was well for him that the door stood open; he jumped out among the bushes into the new-fallen snow, — he lay there as in a dream.

But it would be too melancholy to relate all the trouble and misery that he was obliged to suffer during the severity of the winter. He was lying on a moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine warmly again, the larks sang, and beautiful spring had returned.

And once more he shook his wings. They were stronger than formerly, and bore him forwards quickly, and, before he was well aware of it, he was in a large garden where the apple-trees stood in full bloom, where the syringas sent forth their fragrance, and hung their long green branches down into the winding canal. O, everything was so lovely, so full of the freshness of spring! And out of the thicket came three beautiful white Swans. They displayed their feathers so proudly, and swam so lightly, so lightly! The Duckling knew the glorious creatures, and was seized with a strange melancholy.

"I will fly to them, those kingly birds!" said he. "They will kill me, because I, ugly as I am, have presumed to approach them. But it matters not; better to be killed by them than to be bitten by the ducks, pecked by the hens, kicked by the girl who feeds the poultry, and to have so much to suffer during the winter!" He flew into the water, and swam towards the beautiful creatures; they saw him and shot forward to meet him. "Only kill me," said the poor animal, and he bowed his head low, expecting death;

but what did he see in the water? He saw beneath him his own form, no longer that of a plump, ugly, gray bird, — it was that of a Swan.

It matters not to have been born in a duck-yard, if one has been hatched from a Swan's egg.

The good creature felt himself really elevated by all the troubles and adversities he had experienced. He could now rightly estimate his own happiness, and the larger Swans swam around him, and stroked him with their beaks.

Some little children were running about in the garden; they threw grain and bread into the water, and the youngest exclaimed, "There is a new one!" the others also cried out, "Yes, there is a new Swan come!" and they clapped their hands, and danced around. They ran to their father and mother, bread and cake were thrown into the water, and every one said, "The new one is the best, so young and so beautiful!" and the old Swans bowed before him. The young Swan felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings; he scarcely knew what to do, he was all too happy, but still not proud, for a good heart is never proud.

He remembered how he had been persecuted and derided, and he now heard every one say he was the most beautiful of all beautiful birds. The syringas bent down their branches towards him low into the water, and the sun shone so warmly and brightly, — he shook his feathers, stretched his slender neck, and in the joy of his heart said, "How little did I dream of so much happiness when I was the ugly, despised Duckling!"

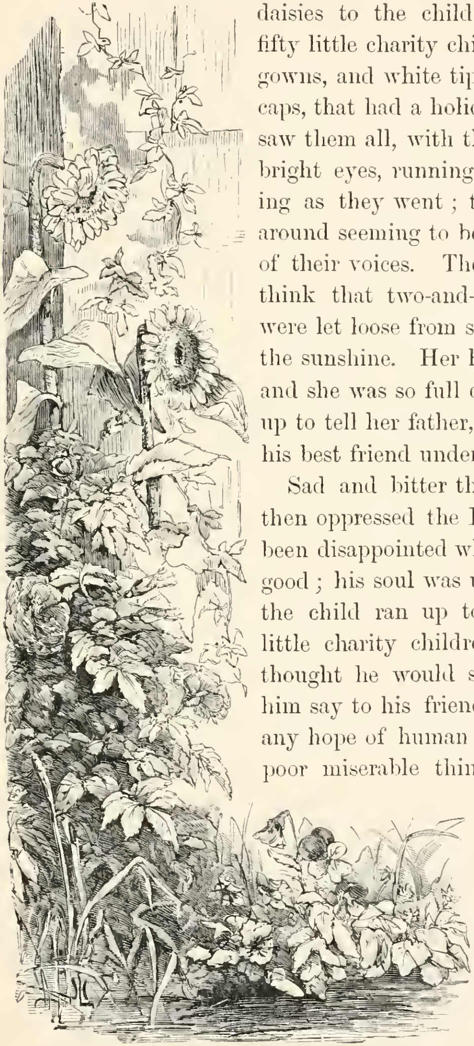
Hans Christian Andersen.

THE POET AND HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER.

IT was a June morning. Roses and yellow jasmine covered the old wall in the Poet's garden. The little brown mason bees flew in and out of their holds beneath the pink and white and yellow flowers. Peacock-butterflies, with large blue eyes on their crimson velvet wings, fluttered about and settled on the orange-brown wall-flowers. Aloft, in the broad-leaved sycamore-tree, the blackbird was singing as if he were out of his senses for joy; his song was as loud as any nightingale, and his heart was glad, because his young brood was hatched, and he knew that they now sat with their little yellow beaks poking out of the nest, and thinking what a famous bird their father was. All the robins and tomtits and linnets and redstarts that sat in the trees of the garden den shouted vivas and bravuras, and encored him delightfully.

The Poet himself sat under the double-flowering hawthorn, which was then all in blossom. He sat on a rustic seat, and his best friend sat beside him. Beneath the lower branches of the tree was hung the canary-bird's cage, which the children had brought out because the day was so fine, and the little canary loved fresh air and the smell of flowers. It never troubled him that other birds flew about from one end of the garden to the other, or sat and sung on the leafy branches, for he loved his cage; and when the old blackbird poured forth his grand melodies, the little canary sat like a prince in a stage-box, and nodded his head, and sang an accompaniment.

One of the Poet's children, his little daughter, sat in her own little garden, which was full of flowers, while bees and butterflies flitted about in the sunshine. The child, however, was not noticing them; she was thinking only of one thing, and that was the large daisy-root which was all in flower; it was the largest daisy-root in the whole garden, and two-and-fifty double pink-and-white daisies were crowded upon it. They were, however, no longer daisies to the child's eyes, but two-and-fifty little charity children in green stuff gowns, and white tippets, and white linen caps, that had a holiday given them. She saw them all, with their pink cheeks and bright eyes, running in a group, and talking as they went; the hum of the bees around seeming to be the pleasant sound of their voices. The child was happy to think that two-and-fifty charity children were let loose from school to run about in the sunshine. Her heart went with them, and she was so full of joy that she started up to tell her father, who was sitting with his best friend under the hawthorn-tree.



Sad and bitter thoughts, however, just then oppressed the Poet's heart. He had been disappointed where he had hoped for good; his soul was under a cloud; and as the child ran up to tell him about the little charity children in whose joy she thought he would sympathize, she heard him say to his friend, "I have no longer any hope of human nature now. It is a poor miserable thing, and is not worth working for. My best endeavors have been spent in its service, — my youth and my manhood's strength, my very life, — and this is my reward! I will no longer strive to do good. I will write for money alone, as others do, and not for the good of mankind!"

The Poet's words were bitter, and tears came into the eyes of his best friend. Never had the child heard such words from her father before, for he had always been to her as a great and good angel.

"I will write," said he, "henceforth for money, as others do, and not for the good of mankind."

"My father, if you do," said the child, in a tone of mournful indignation, "I will never read what you write! I will trample your writings under my feet!"

Large tears rolled down her cheeks, and her eyes were fixed on her father's face.

The Poet took the child in his arms and kissed her. An angel touched his heart, and he now felt that he could forgive his bitterest enemies.

"I will tell you a story, my child," he said, in his usually mild voice.

The child leaned her head against his breast, and listened.

"Once upon a time," he began, "there was a man who dwelt in a great, wide wilderness. He was a poor man, and worked very hard for his bread. He lived in a cave of a rock, and because the sun shone burning hot into the cave, he twined roses and jessamines and honeysuckles all around it; and in front of it, and on the ledges of the rock, he planted ferns and sweet shrubs, and made it very pleasant. Water ran gurgling from a fissure in the rock into a little basin, whence it poured in gentle streams through the garden, in which grew all kinds of delicious fruits. Birds sang in the tall trees which Nature herself had planted; and little squirrels, and lovely green lizards, with bright, intelligent eyes, lived in the branches and among the flowers.

"All would have gone well with the man, had not evil spirits taken possession of his cave. They troubled him night and day. They dropped canker-blight upon his roses, nipped off his jasmine and honeysuckle-flowers, and, in the form of caterpillars and blight, ate his beautiful fruits.

"It made the man angry and bitter in his feelings. The flowers were no longer beautiful to him, and when he looked on them he thought only of the canker and the caterpillar.

"'I can no longer take pleasure in them,' he said; 'I will leave the cave, and go elsewhere.'

"He did so; and travelled on and on, a long way. But it was a vast wilderness in which he dwelt, and thus it was many and many a weary day before he came to a place of rest; nor did he know that all this time the evil spirits who had plagued him so in his own cave were still going with him.

"But so they were. And they made every place he came to seem worse than the last. Their very breath cast a blight upon everything.

"He was footsore and weary, and very miserable. A feeling like despair was in his heart, and he said that he might as well die as live. He lay down in the wilderness, so unhappy was he, and scarcely had he done so, when he heard behind him the pleasantest sound in the world, — a little child singing like a bird, because her heart was innocent and full of joy; and the next moment she was at his side.

"The evil spirits that were about him drew back a little when they saw her coming, because she brought with her a beautiful company of angels and bright spirits, — little cherubs with round, rosy cheeks, golden hair, and laughing eyes between two dove's wings as white as snow. The child had not the least idea that these beautiful spirits were always about her; all she knew was that she was full of joy, and that she loved above all things to do good. When she saw the poor man lying there, she went up to him, and talked to him so pityingly, and yet so cheerfully, that he felt as if her words would cure him. She told him that she lived just by, and that he should go with her, and rest and get well in her cave.

"He went with her, and found that her cave was just such a one as his own, only much smaller. Roses and honeysuckles and jasmine grew all around it; and birds were singing, and gold-fish were sporting about in the water; and there were beds of strawberries, all red and luscious, that filled the air with fragrance.

"It was a beautiful place. There seemed to be no canker nor blight on anything. And yet the man saw how spiders had woven webs like the most beautiful lace from one vine-branch to another; and butterflies that once had been devouring caterpillars were flitting about. Just as in his own garden, yellow frogs were squatted under the cool green strawberry leaves. But the child loved both the frogs and the green lizards, and said that they did her no harm, and that there were plenty of strawberries both for them and for her.

"The evil spirits that had troubled the man, and followed him, could not get into the child's garden. It was impossible, because all those rosy-cheeked cherubs and white-robed angels lived there; and that which is good, be it ever so small, is a great deal stronger than that which is evil, be it ever so large. They therefore sat outside and bit their nails for vexation; and as the man stayed a long time with the child, they got so tired of waiting that a good number of them flew away forever.

"At length the man kissed the child and went back to his own place; and when he got there he had the pleasure of finding that, owing to the evil spirits having been so long away, the flowers and fruits had, in great measure, recovered themselves. There was hardly any canker or blight left. And as the child came now very often to see him,—for, after all, they did not live so very far apart, only that the man had wandered a long way round in the wilderness,—and brought with her all the bright company that dwelt with her, the place was freed, at least while she stayed, from the evil ones.

"This is a true story, a perfectly true story," added the Poet, when he had brought his little narrative to an end; "and there are many men who live like him in a wilderness, and who go a long way round about before they can find a resting-place. And happy is it for such when they can have a child for their neighbor; for our Divine Master has himself told us that blessed are little children, and that of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

The Poet was silent. His little daughter kissed him, and then, without saying a word about the little charity children, ran off to sit down beside them again, and perhaps to tell them the story which her father had just related to her.

Mary Howitt.

THE RED FLOWER.

WHAT it was, where it grew, I should find it difficult to tell you. I had seen it once, when a little child, in a stony road, among the thorns of a hedge; and I had gathered it. Ah! that was certain! It waved at the end of a long stalk; its petals were of a flame-like red; its form was unlike anything known, resembling somewhat a censer, from which issued golden stamens.

Since those earliest days, I had often sought it, often asked for it. When I mentioned it, people laughed at me. I spoke of the flower no more, but I sought for it still.

"Impossible!" Experience writes the word in the dictionary of the man. In the child's vocabulary, it has no existence. The marvellous to him is perfectly natural. Things which he sees to be beautiful arrange themselves along his path; why should he have a doubt of this or of that? By and by, exact bounds will limit his domain. A faint line, then a barrier, then a wall: erelong the wall will rise and surround the man, — a dungeon from which he must have wings to escape.

Around the child are neither walls nor boundary lines, but a limitless expanse, everywhere glowing with beautiful colors. In the far-off depths, reality mingles with revery. It is like an ocean whose blue waves glimmer and sparkle on the horizon, where they kiss the shores of enchanted isles.

I sought the red flower. Have you never searched for it too?

This morning, in the spring atmosphere, its memory came back to my heart. It seemed to me that I should find it; and I walked on at random.

I went through solitary footpaths. The laborers had gone to their noonday repose. The meadows were all in bloom. Weeds, growing in spite of wind and tide spread a golden carpet beside the rose-colored meadow-grass. In the wet places were tangles of pale blue forget-me-nots ; beyond them, tufts of the azure veronica, and over the stream hung the straw-colored lotus. Under the grain, yet green, corn-poppies were waving. With every breeze a scarlet wave arose, swelled, and vanished.

Blue butterflies danced before me, mingling and dispersing like floating flower-petals in the air. Under the umbelled plants was a pavement of beetles, of black and purple mosaic. On the tufts of the verbena gathered insects with shells blazoned like the

escutcheons of the knights of the Middle Ages. The quail was calling in the thickets; three notes here, and three there. I found myself on the skirt of a pine forest, and I seated myself on the grass.

The red flower! I thought of it no longer. The butterflies had carried it away. I thought how beautiful life is on a spring morning; what happiness it is to open the lips and inhale the fresh air; what joy to open the eyes and behold the earth in her bridal robes; what delight to open the hands and gather the sweet-smelling blossoms. Then I thought of the God of the heavens, that, arching above me, spoke of his power. I thought of the Lord of the little ones, — of the insects that, flitting about me, spoke of his goodness. All these accents awoke a chord in harmony with that which burst forth from the blossoming meadows.

I arose, and came to a recess in the shadowy edge of the forest.

As I walked, something glowed in the grass; something dazzled me; something made my heart throb. It was the red flower!

I seized it. I held it tightly in my hand. It was the flower; yes, it was the same, but with a strange, new splendor. I possessed it, yet I dared not look upon it.

Suddenly I felt the blossom tremble in my fingers. They loosened their grasp. The flower dilated. It expanded its carnation petals, slightly tinged with green; it spread out a purple calyx; two stamens, two antennæ, vibrated a moment. The blossom quivered; some breath had made it shudder; its wings unfolded. As I gazed, it fluttered a little, then rose in a golden sunbeam; its colors played in the different strata of the air, the roseate, the azure, the ether; it disappeared.

O my flower! I know whither thou goest and whence thou comest! I know the hidden sources of thine eternal bloom. I know the Word that created thee; I know the Eden where thou growest!

Winged flower! he who falters in his search for thee will never find thee. He who seeks thee on earth may grasp thee, but will surely lose thee again. Flower of Paradise, thou belongest only to him who searches for thee where thou hast been planted by the hand of the Lord. *Madame De Gasparin.*

THE STORY WITHOUT AN END.

I.

THERE was once a child who lived in a little hut, and in the hut there was nothing but a little bed, and a looking-glass which hung in a dark corner. Now the child cared nothing at all about the looking-glass, but as soon as the first sunbeam glided softly through the casement and kissed his sweet eyelids, and the finch and the linnet waked him merrily with their morning songs, he arose and went out into the green meadow. And he begged flour of the primrose, and sugar of the violet, and butter of the buttercup ; he shook dew-drops from the cowslip into the cup of a harebell ; spread out a large lime-leaf, set his little breakfast upon it, and feasted daintily. Sometimes he invited a humming-bee, oftener a gay butterfly, to partake of his feast ; but his favorite guest was the blue dragon-fly. The bee murmured a good deal, in a solemn tone, about his riches ; but the child thought that if *he* were a bee, heaps of treasure would not make him gay and happy ; and that it must be much more delightful and glorious to float about in the free and fresh breezes of spring, and to hum joyously in the web of the sunbeams, than, with heavy feet and heavy heart, to stow the silver wax and the golden honey into cells.

To this the butterfly assented ; and he told how, once on a time, he too had been greedy and sordid ; how he had thought of nothing but eating, and had never once turned his eyes upwards to the blue heavens. At length, however, a complete change had come over him ; and instead of crawling spiritless about the dirty earth, half dreaming, he all at once awaked as out of a deep sleep. And now he could rise into the air ; and it was his greatest joy sometimes to play with the light, and to reflect the heavens in the bright eyes of his wings ; sometimes to listen to the soft language of the flowers, and catch their secrets. Such talk delighted the child, and his breakfast was the sweeter to him, and the sunshine on leaf and flower seemed to him more bright and cheering.

But when the bee had flown off to beg from flower to flower, and the butterfly had fluttered away to his playfellows, the dragon-fly still remained poised on a blade of grass. Her slender and burnished body, more brightly and deeply blue than the deep blue sky, glistened in the sunbeam ; and her net-like wings laughed at the flowers because *they* could not fly, but must stand still and abide the wind and the rain. The dragon-fly sipped a little of the child's clear dew-drops and blue-violet honey, and then whispered her winged words. And the child made an end of his repast, closed his dark blue eyes, bent down his beautiful head, and listened to the sweet prattle.

Then the dragon-fly told much of the merry life in the green wood, — how sometimes she played hide-and-seek with her playfellows under the broad leaves of the oak and the beech trees ; or hunt-the-hare along the surface of the still waters ; sometimes quietly watched the sunbeams, as they flew busily from moss to flower and from flower to bush, and shed life and warmth over all. But at night, she said, the moonbeams glided softly around the wood, and dropped dew into the mouths of all the thirsty plants; and when the dawn pelted the slumberers with the soft roses of heaven, some of the half-drunken flowers looked up and smiled, but most of them could not so much as raise their heads for a long, long time.

Such stories did the dragon-fly tell; and as the child sat motionless, with his eyes shut, and his head rested on his little hand, she thought he had fallen asleep; so she poised her double wings and flew into the rustling wood.

II.

But the child was only sunk into a dream of delight, and was wishing *he* were a sunbeam or a moonbeam; and he would have been glad to hear more and more, and forever. But at last, as all was still, he opened his eyes and looked around for his dear guest, but she was flown far away; so he could not bear to sit there any longer alone, and he rose and went to the gurgling brook. It gushed and rolled so merrily, and tumbled so wildly along as it hurried to throw itself head-over-heels into the river, just as if the great massy rock out of which it sprang were close behind it, and could only be escaped by a break-neck leap.

Then the child began to talk to the little waves, and asked them whence they came. They would not stay to give him an answer, but danced away, one over another, till at last, that the sweet child might not be grieved, a drop of water stopped behind a piece of rock. From her the child heard strange histories; but he could not understand them all, for she told him about her former life, and about the depths of the mountain.

"A long while ago," said the drop of water, "I lived with my countless sisters in the great ocean, in peace and unity. We had all sorts of pastimes; sometimes we mounted up high into the air, and peeped at the stars; then we sank plump down deep below, and looked how the coral-builders work till they are tired, that they may reach the light of day at last. But I was conceited, and thought myself much better than my sisters. And so one day, when the sun rose out of the sea, I clung fast to one of his hot beams, and thought that now I should reach the stars, and become one of them. But I had not ascended far, when the sunbeam shook me off, and, in spite of all I could say or do, let me fall into a dark cloud. And soon a flash of fire darted through the cloud, and now I thought I must surely die; but the whole cloud laid itself down softly upon the top of a mountain, and so I escaped with my fright and a black eye. Now I thought I should remain hidden, when all on a sudden, I slipped over a round pebble, fell from one stone to another, down into the depths of the mountain, till at last it was pitch dark, and I could neither see nor hear anything. Then I found, indeed, that 'pride goeth before a fall,' resigned myself to my fate, and, as I had already laid aside all my unhappy pride in the cloud, my portion was now the salt of humility; and after undergoing many purifications from the hidden virtues of metals and minerals, I was at length permitted to come up once more into the free cheerful air; and now will I run back to my sisters, and there wait patiently till I am called to something better."

But hardly had she done when the root of a forget-me-not caught the drop of water by her hair, and sucked her in, that she might become a floweret, and twinkle brightly as a blue star on the green firmament of earth.

III.

The child did not very well know what to think of all this; he went thoughtfully home, and laid himself on his little bed; and all night long he was wandering about on the ocean, and among the stars, and over the dark mountain. But the moon loved to look on the slumbering child, as he lay with his little head softly pillowed on his right arm. She lingered a long time before his little window, and went slowly away to lighten the dark chamber of some sick person. As the moon's soft light lay on the child's eyelids, he fancied he sat in a golden boat, on a great, great water; countless stars swam glittering on the dark mirror. He stretched out his hand to catch the nearest star, but it vanished, and the water sprayed up against him. Then he saw clearly that these were not the real stars; he looked up to heaven, and wished he could fly thither. But in the mean time the moon had wandered on her way; and now the child was led in his dream into the clouds, and he thought he was sitting on a white sheep, and he saw many lambs grazing around him. He tried to catch a little lamb to play with, but it was all mist and vapor; and the child was sorrowful, and wished himself down again in his own meadow, where his own lamb was sporting gayly about.

Meanwhile the moon was gone to sleep behind the mountains, and all around was dark. Then the child dreamed that he fell down into the dark, gloomy caverns of the mountain; and at that he was so frightened that he suddenly awoke, just as Morning opened her clear eye over the nearest hill.

IV.

The child started up, and, to recover himself from his fright, went into the little flower-garden behind his cottage, where the beds were surrounded by ancient palm-trees, and where he knew that all the flowers would nod kindly at him. But, behold, the tulip turned up her nose, and the ranunculus held her head as stiffly as possible, that she might not bow good-morrow to him. The rose, with her fair round cheeks, smiled, and greeted the child lovingly; so he went up to her and kissed her fragrant mouth. And then the rose tenderly complained that he so seldom came into the garden, and that she gave out her bloom and her fragrance the livelong day in vain; for the other flowers could not see her because they were too low, or did not care to look at her because they themselves were so rich in bloom and fragrance. But she was most delighted when she glowed in the blooming head of a child, and could pour all her heart's secrets to him in sweet odors.

Among other things, the rose whispered in his ear that she was the fulness of beauty.

And in truth the child, while looking at her beauty, seemed to have quite forgotten to go on, till the blue larkspur called to him, and asked whether he cared nothing more about his faithful friend; she said that she was unchanged, and that even in death she should look upon him with eyes of unfading blue.

The child thanked her for her true-heartedness, and passed on to the hyacinth, who stood near the puffy, full-cheeked, gaudy tulips. Even from a distance the hyacinth sent forth kisses to him, for she knew not how to express her love. Although she was not remarkable for her beauty, yet the child felt himself wondrously attracted by her, for he thought no flower loved him so well. But the hyacinth poured out her full heart and wept bitterly, because she stood so lonely; the tulips indeed were her countrymen, but they were so cold and unfeeling that she was ashamed of them. The child encouraged her, and told her he did not think things were so bad as she fancied. The tulips spoke their love in bright looks, while she uttered hers in fragrant words; that these, indeed, were lovelier and more intelligible, but that the others were not to be despised.

Then the hyacinth was comforted, and said she would be content; and the child went on to the powdered auricula, who, in her bashfulness, looked kindly up to him, and would gladly have given him more than kind looks had she had more to give. But the child was satisfied with her modest greeting; he felt that he was poor too, and he saw the deep, thoughtful colors that lay beneath her golden dust. But the humble flower, of her own accord, sent him to her neighbor, the lily, whom she willingly acknowledged as her queen. And when the child came to the lily, the slender flower waved to and fro, and bowed her pale head with gentle pride and stately modesty, and sent forth a fragrant greeting to him. The child knew not what had come to him; it reached his inmost heart, so that his eyes filled with soft tears. Then he marked how the lily gazed with a clear and steadfast eye upon the sun, and how the sun looked down again into her pure chalice, and how, amid this interchange of looks, the three golden threads united in the centre. And the child heard how one scarlet ladybird at the bottom of the cup said to another, " Knowest thou not that we dwell in the flower of heaven?" and the other replied, " Yes, and now will the mystery be fulfilled."

And as the child saw and heard all this, the dim image of his unknown parents, as it were veiled in a holy light, floated before his eyes; he strove to grasp it, but the light was gone, and the child slipped, and would have fallen, had not the branch of a currant-bush caught and held him; he took some of the bright berries for his morning's meal, and went back to his hut and stripped the little branches.

V.

In the hut he stayed not long, all was so gloomy, close, and silent within; and abroad everything seemed to smile, and to exult in the clear and unbounded space. Therefore the child went out into the green wood, of which the dragon-fly had told him such pleasant stories. But he found everything far more beautiful and lovely even than she had described it; for all about, wherever he went, the tender moss pressed his little feet, and the delicate grass embraced his knees, and the flowers kissed his hands, and even the branches stroked his cheeks with a kind and refreshing touch, and the high trees threw their fragrant shade around him.

There was no end to his delight. The little birds warbled, and sang, and fluttered, and hopped about, and the delicate wood-flowers gave out their beauty and their odors; and every sweet sound took a sweet odor by the hand, and thus walked through the open door of the child's heart, and held a joyous nuptial dance therein. But the nightingale and the lily of the valley led the dance; for the nightingale sang of naught but love, and the lily breathed of naught but innocence, and he was the bridegroom and she was the bride. And the nightingale was never weary of repeating the same thing a hundred times over, for the spring of love which gushed from his heart was ever new; and the lily bowed her head bashfully, that no one might see her glowing heart. And yet the one lived so solely and entirely in the other, that no one could see whether the notes of the nightingale were floating lilies, or the lilies visible notes, falling like dew-drops from the nightingale's throat.

The child's heart was full of joy even to the brim. He set himself down, and he almost thought he should like to take root there, and live forever among the sweet plants and flowers, and so become a true sharer in all their gentle pleasures. For he felt a deep delight in the still, secluded twilight existence of the mosses and small herbs, which felt not the storm, nor the frost, nor the scorching sunbeam, but dwelt quietly among their many friends and neighbors, feasting in peace and good-fellowship on the dew and cool shadows which the mighty trees shed upon them. To them it was a high festival when a sunbeam chanced to visit their lowly home; whilst the tops of the lofty trees could find joy and beauty only in the purple rays of morning or evening.

VI.

And as the child sat there, a little mouse rustled from among the dry leaves of the former year, and a lizard half glided from a crevice in the rock, and when they saw that he designed them no evil, they took courage and came nearer to him.

"I should like to live with you," said the child to the two little creatures, in a soft, subdued voice, that he might not frighten them. "Your chambers are so snug, so warm, and yet so shaded, and the flowers grow in at your windows, and the birds sing you their morning song, and call you to table and to bed with their clear warblings."

"Yes," said the mouse, "it would be all very well if all the plants bore nuts and mast, instead of those silly flowers; and if I were not obliged to grub under ground in the spring, and gnaw the bitter roots, whilst they are dressing themselves in their fine flowers, and flaunting it to the world, as if they had endless stores of honey in their cellars."

"Hold your tongue!" interrupted the lizard, pertly; "do you think, because you are gray, that other people must throw away their handsome clothes, or let them lie in the dark wardrobe under ground, and wear nothing but gray too? I am not so envious. The flowers may dress themselves as they like for all me; they pay for it out of their own pockets, and they feed bees and beetles from their cups; but what I want to know is, of what use are birds in the world? Such a fluttering and chattering, truly, from morning early to evening late, that one is worried and stunned to death, and there is never a day's peace for them. And they do nothing, only snap up the flies and the spiders out of the mouths of such as I. For my part, I should be perfectly satisfied, provided all the birds in the world were flies and beetles."

The child changed color, and his heart was sick and saddened when he heard their evil tongues. He could not imagine how anybody could speak ill of the beautiful flowers, or scoff at his beloved birds. He was waked out of a sweet dream, and the wood seemed to him a lonely desert, and he was ill at ease. He started up hastily, so that the mouse and the lizard shrank back alarmed, and did not look around them till they thought themselves safe out of the reach of the stranger with the large severe eyes.

VII.

But the child went away from the place; and as he hung down his head thoughtfully, he did not observe that he took the wrong path, nor see how the flowers on either side bowed their heads to welcome him, nor hear how the old birds from the boughs and the young from the nests cried aloud to him, "God bless thee, our dear little prince!" And he went on and on, farther and farther into the deep wood; and he thought over the foolish and heartless talk of the two selfish chatterers, and could not understand it. He would fain have forgotten it, but he could not. And the more he pondered, the more it seemed to him as if a malicious spider had spun her web around him, and as if his eyes were weary with trying to look through it.

And suddenly he came to a still water, above which young beeches lovingly intwined their arms. He looked in the water, and his eyes were riveted to it as if by enchantment. He could not move, but stood and gazed in the soft, placid mirror, from the bosom of which the tender green foliage, with the deep blue heavens between, gleamed so wondrously upon him. His sorrow was all forgotten, and even the echo of the discord in his little heart was hushed. That heart was once more in his eyes; and fain would he have drunk in the soft beauty of the colors that lay beneath him, or have plunged into the lovely deep.

Then the breeze began to sigh among the tree-tops. The child raised his eyes and saw overhead the quivering green, and the deep blue behind it, and he knew not whether he were awake or dreaming; which were the real leaves and the real heavens, — those in the heights above, or in the depths beneath? Long did the child waver, and his thoughts floated in a delicious dreaminess from one to the other, till the dragon-fly flew to him in affectionate haste, and with rustling wings greeted her kind host. The child returned her greeting, and was glad to meet an acquaintance with whom he could share the rich feast of his joy. But first he asked the dragon-fly if she could decide for him between the upper and the nether, — the height and the depth. The dragon-fly flew above, and beneath, and around; but the water spake: "The foliage and the sky above are not the true ones; the leaves wither and fall; the sky is often overcast, and sometimes quite dark." Then the leaves and the sky said, "The water only apes us; it must change its pictures at our pleasure, and can retain none." Then the dragon-fly remarked that the height and the depth existed only in the eyes of the child, and that the leaves and the sky were true and real only in his thoughts; because in the mind alone the picture was permanent and enduring, and could be carried with him whithersoever he went.

This she said to the child; but she immediately warned him to return, for the leaves were already beating the tattoo in the evening breeze, and the lights were disappearing one by one in every corner.

Then the child confessed to her with alarm that he knew not how he should find the way back, and that he feared the dark night would overtake him if he attempted to go home alone; so the dragon-fly flew on before him, and showed him a cave in the rock where he might pass the night. And the child was well content; for he had often wished to try if he could sleep out of his accustomed bed.

VIII.

But the dragon-fly was fleet, and gratitude strengthened her wings to pay her host the honor she owed him. And truly, in the dim twilight, good counsel and guidance were scarce. She flitted hither and thither without knowing rightly what was to be done; when, by the last vanishing sunbeam, she saw hanging on the edge of the cave some strawberries who had drunk so deep of the evening red that their heads were quite heavy. Then she flew up to a harebell who stood near, and whispered in her ear that the lord and king of all the flowers was in the wood, and ought to be received and welcomed as beseemed his dignity. Aglaia did not need that this should be repeated. She began to ring her sweet bells with all her might, and when her neighbor heard the sound, she rang hers also; and soon all the harebells, great and small, were in motion, and rang as if it had been for the nuptials of their mother earth herself with the prince of the sun. The tone of the bluebells was deep and rich, and that of the white, high and clear, and all blended together in a delicious harmony.

But the birds were fast asleep in their high nests, and the ears of the other animals were not delicate enough, or were too much overgrown with hair, to hear them. The fire-flies alone heard the joyous peal, for they were akin to the flowers, through their common ancestor, light. They inquired of their nearest relation, the lily of the valley, and from her they heard that a large flower had just passed along the footpath more blooming than the loveliest rose, and with two stars more brilliant than those of the brightest fire-fly, and that it must needs be their king. Then all the fire-flies flew up and down the footpath, and sought everywhere till at length they came, as the dragon-fly had hoped they would, to the cave.

And now, as they looked at the child, and every one of them saw itself reflected in his clear eyes, they rejoiced exceedingly, and called all their fellows together, and alighted on the bushes all around ; and soon it was so light in the cave that herb and grass began to grow as if it had been broad day. Now, indeed, was the joy and triumph of the dragon-fly complete. The child was delighted with the merry and silvery tones of the bells, and with the many little bright-eyed companions around him, and with the deep red strawberries which bowed down their heads to his touch.

IX.

And when he had eaten his fill, he sat down on the soft moss, crossed one little leg over the other, and began to gossip with the fire-flies. And as he so often thought on his unknown parents, he asked them who were their parents. Then the one nearest to him gave him answer ; and he told how that they were formerly flowers, but none of those who thrust their rooty hands greedily into the ground and draw nourishment from the dingy earth only to make themselves fat and large withal ; but that the light was dearer to them than anything, even at night ; and while the other flowers slept, they gazed unwearied on the light, and drank it in with eager adoration, — sun, and moon, and starlight. And the light had so thoroughly purified them, that they had not sucked in poisonous juices like the yellow flowers of the earth, but sweet odors for sick and fainting hearts, and oil of potent ethereal virtue for the weak and the wounded; and at length, when their autumn came, they did not, like the others, wither and sink down, leaf and flower, to be swallowed up by the darksome earth, but shook off their earthly garment, and mounted aloft into the clear air. But there it was so wondrously bright that sight failed them; and when they came to themselves again, they were fire-flies, each sitting on a withered flower-stalk.

And now the child liked the bright-eyed flies better than ever; and he talked a little longer with them, and inquired why they showed themselves so much more in spring. They did it, they said, in the hope that their gold-green radiance might allure their cousins, the flowers, to the pure love of light.

X.

During this conversation, the dragon-fly had been preparing a bed for her host. The moss upon which the child sat had grown a foot high behind his back, out of pure joy; but the dragon-fly and her sisters had so revelled upon it, that it was laid at its length along the cave. The dragon-fly had awakened every spider in the neighborhood out of her sleep, and when they saw the brilliant light they had set to work spinning so industriously that their web hung down like a curtain before the mouth of the cave. But as the child saw the ant peeping up at him, he entreated the fire-flies not to deprive themselves any longer of their merry games in the wood on his account. And the dragon-fly and her sisters raised the curtain till the child had lain him down to rest, and then let it fall again, that the mischievous gnats might not get in to disturb his slumbers.

The child laid himself down to sleep, for he was very tired; but he could not sleep, for his couch of moss was quite another thing than his little bed, and the cave was all strange to him. He turned himself on one side and then on the other, and, as nothing would do, he raised himself and sat upright, to wait till sleep might choose to come. But sleep would not come at all; and the only wakeful eyes in the whole wood were the child's. For the harebells had rung themselves weary, and the fire-flies had flown about till they were tired, and even the dragon-fly, who would fain have kept watch in front of the cave, had dropped sound asleep.

The wood grew stiller and stiller, here and there fell a dry leaf which had been driven from its old dwelling-place by a fresh one, here and there a young bird gave a soft chirp when its mother squeezed it in the nest; and from time to time a gnat hummed for a minute or two in the curtain, till a spider crept on tiptoe along its web, and gave him such a gripe in the windpipe as soon spoiled his trumpeting. And the deeper the silence became, the more intently did the child listen, and at last the slightest sound thrilled him from head to foot. At length, all was still as death in the wood; and the world seemed as if it never would wake again. The child bent forward to see whether it were as dark abroad as in the cave, but he saw nothing save the pitch dark night, who had wrapped everything in her thick veil. Yet as he looked upwards his eyes met the friendly glance of two or three stars; and this was a most joyful surprise to him, for he felt himself no longer so entirely alone. The stars were indeed far, far away, but yet he knew them, and they knew him; for they looked into his eyes.

The child's whole soul was fixed in his gaze; and it seemed to him as if he must needs fly out of the darksome cave thither, where the stars were beaming with such pure and serene light; and he felt how poor and lowly he was when he thought of their brilliancy; and how cramped and fettered, when he thought of their free unbounded course along the heavens.

XI.

But the stars went on their course, and left their glittering picture only a little while before the child's eyes. Even this faded, and then vanished quite away. And he was beginning to feel tired, and to wish to lay himself down again, when a flickering will-o'-the-wisp appeared from behind a bush, — so that the child thought, at first, one of the stars had wandered out of its way and had come to visit him, and to take him with it. And the child breathed quick with joy and surprise, and then the will-o'-the-wisp came nearer, and set himself down on a damp mossy stone in front of the cave, and another fluttered quickly after him, and sat down over against him, and sighed deeply, "Thank God, then, that I can rest at last!" "Yes," said the other, "for that you may thank the innocent child who sleeps there within; it was his pure breath that freed us." "Are you, then," said the child, hesitatingly, "not of yon stars which wander so brightly there above?" "O, if we were stars," replied the first, "we should pursue our tranquil path through the pure element, and should leave this wood and the whole darksome earth to itself." "And not," said the other, "sit brooding on the face of the shallow pool."

The child was curious to know who these could be who shone so beautifully and yet seemed so discontented. Then the first began to relate how he had been a child too, and how, as he grew up, it had always been his greatest delight to deceive people and play them tricks, to show his wit and cleverness. He had always, he said, poured such a stream of smooth words over people, and encompassed himself with such a shining mist, that men had been attracted by it to their own hurt.

But once on a time there appeared a plain man who only spoke two or three simple words, and suddenly the bright mist vanished, and left him naked and deformed, to the scorn and mockery of the whole world. But the man had turned away his face from him in pity, while he was almost dead with shame and anger. And when he came to himself again, he knew not what had befallen him, till at length he found that it was his fate to hover, without rest or change, over the surface of the bog as a will-o'-the-wisp.

"With me it fell out quite otherwise," said the first; "instead of giving light without warmth, as I now do, I burned without shining. When I was only a child, people gave way to me in everything, so that I was intoxicated with self-love. If I saw any one shine, I longed to put out his light; and the more intensely I wished this, the more did my own small glimmering turn back upon myself, and inwardly burn fiercely while all without was darker than ever. But if any one who shone more brightly would have kindly given me of his light, then did my inward flame burst forth to destroy him. But the flame passed through the light and harmed it not: it shone only the more brightly, while I was withered and exhausted. And once upon a time I met a little smiling child, who played with a cross of palm branches, and wore a beaming coronet around his golden locks. He took me kindly by the hand, and said, 'My friend, you are now very gloomy and sad, but if you will become a child again, even as I am, you will have a bright circlet such as I have.' When I heard that, I was so angry with myself and with the child that I was scorched by my inward fire. Now would I fain fly up to the sun to fetch rays from him, but the rays drove me back with these words: 'Return thither whence thou camest, thou dark fire of envy, for the sun lightens only in love; the greedy earth, indeed, sometimes turns his mild light into scorching fire. Fly back, then, for with thy like alone must thou dwell!' I fell, and when I recovered myself I was glimmering coldly above the stagnant waters."

While they were talking, the child had fallen asleep; for he knew nothing of the world, nor of men, and he could make nothing of their stories. Weariness had spoken a more intelligible language to him; *that* he understood, and had fallen asleep.

XII.

Softly and soundly he slept till the rosy morning clouds stood upon the mountain, and announced the coming of their lord the sun. But as soon as the tidings spread over field and wood, the thousand-voiced echo awoke, and sleep was no more to be thought of. And soon did the royal sun himself arise; at first his dazzling diadem alone appeared above the mountains; at length he stood upon their summit in the full majesty of his beauty, in all the charms of eternal youth, bright and glorious, his kindly glance embracing every creature of earth, from the stately oak to the blade of grass bending under the foot of the wayfaring man.

Then arose from every breast, from every throat, the joyous song of praise; and it was as if the whole plain and wood were become a temple, whose roof was the heaven, whose altar the mountain, whose congregation all creatures, whose priest the sun.

But the child walked forth and was glad; for the birds sang sweetly, and it seemed to him as if everything sported and danced out of mere joy to be alive. Here flew two finches through the thicket, and, twittering, pursued each other; there the young buds burst asunder, and the tender leaves peeped out, and expanded themselves in the warm sun, as if they would abide in his glance forever; here a dew-drop trembled, sparkling and twinkling on a blade of grass, and knew not that beneath him stood a little moss who was thirsting after him; there troops of flies flew aloft, as if they would soar far over the wood; and so all was life and motion, and the child's heart joyed to see it.

He sat down on a little smooth plot of turf, shaded by the branches of a nut-bush, and thought he should now sip the cup of his delight drop by drop. And first he plucked down some brambles which threatened him with their prickles; then he bent aside some branches which concealed the view; then he removed the stones, so that he might stretch out his feet at full length on the soft turf; and when he had done all this, he bethought himself what was yet to do; and as he found nothing he stood up to look for his acquaintance, the dragon-fly, and to beg her to guide him once more out of the wood into the open field. About midway he met her, and she began to excuse herself for having fallen asleep in the night. The child thought not of the past, were it even but a minute ago, so earnestly did he now wish to get out from among the thick and close trees; for his heart beat high, and he felt as if he should breathe freer in the open ground. The dragon-fly flew on before, and showed him the way as far as the outermost verge of the wood, whence the child could espy his own little hut, and then flew away to her playfellows.

XIII.

The child walked forth alone upon the fresh dewy cornfield. A thousand little suns glittered in his eyes, and a lark soared, warbling, above his head. And the lark proclaimed the joys of the coming year, and awakened endless hopes, while she soared circling higher and higher, till at length her song was like the soft whisper of an angel holding converse with the spring under the blue arch of heaven.

The child had seen the earth-colored little bird rise up before him, and it seemed to him as if the earth had sent her forth from her bosom as a messenger to carry her joy and her thanks up to the sun, because he had turned his beaming countenance again upon her in love and bounty. And the lark hung poised above the hope-giving field, and warbled her clear and joyous song.

She sang of the loveliness of the rosy dawn, and the fresh brilliancy of the earliest sunbeams; of the gladsome springing of the young flowers, and the vigorous shooting of the corn; and her song pleased the child beyond measure. But the lark wheeled in higher and higher circles, and her song sounded softer and sweeter.

And now she sang of the first delights of early love, of wanderings together on the sunny fresh hill-tops, and of the sweet pictures and visions that arise out of the blue and misty distance. The child understood not rightly what he heard, and fain would he have understood, for he thought that even in such visions must be wondrous delight. He gazed aloft after the unwearied bird, but she had disappeared in the morning mist.

Then the child leaned his head on one shoulder to listen if he could no longer hear the little messenger of spring; and he could just catch the distant and quivering notes in which she sang of the fervent longing after the clear element of freedom; after the pure all-present light; and of the blessed foretaste of this desired enfranchisement, of this blending in the sea of celestial happiness.

Yet longer did he listen, for the tones of her song carried him there, where, as yet, his thoughts had never reached, and he felt himself happier in this short and imperfect flight than ever he had felt before. But the lark now dropped suddenly to the earth, for her little body was too heavy for the ambient ether, and her wings were not large nor strong enough for the pure element.

Then the red corn-poppies laughed at the homely-looking bird, and cried to one another and to the surrounding blades of corn in a shrill voice, "Now, indeed, you may see what comes of flying so high, and striving and straining after mere air; people only lose their time, and bring back nothing but weary wings and an empty stomach. That vulgar-looking, ill-dressed little creature would fain raise herself above us all, and has kept up a mighty noise. And now, there she lies on the ground, and can hardly breathe, while we have stood still where we are, sure of a good meal, and have stayed like people of sense where there is something substantial to be had; and in the time she has been fluttering and singing, we have grown a good deal taller and fatter."

The other little red-caps chattered and screamed their assent so loud that the child's ears tingled, and he wished he could chastise them for their spiteful jeers; when a cyane said, in a soft voice, to her younger playmates, "Dear friends, be not led astray by outward show, nor by discourse which regards only outward show. The lark is indeed weary, and the space into which she has soared is void; but the void is not what the lark sought, nor is the seeker returned empty home. She strove after light and freedom, and light and freedom has she proclaimed. She left the earth and its enjoyments, but she has drunk of the pure air of heaven, and has seen that it is not the earth, but the sun, that is steadfast. And if earth has called her back, it can keep nothing of her but what is its own. Her sweet voice and her soaring wings belong to the sun, and will enter into light and freedom long after the foolish prater shall have sunk and been buried in the dark prison of the earth."

And the lark heard her wise and friendly discourse, and, with renewed strength, she sprang once more into the clear and beautiful blue.

Then the child clapped his little hands for joy that the sweet bird had flown up again, and that the red-caps must hold their tongues for shame.

XIV.

And the child was become happy and joyful, and breathed freely again, and thought no more of returning to his hut; for he saw that nothing returned inwards, but rather that all strove outwards into the free air, — the rosy apple-blossoms from their narrow buds, and the gurgling notes from the narrow breast of the lark. The germs burst open the folding doors of the seeds, and broke through the heavy pressure of the earth in order to get at the light; the grasses tore asunder their bands and their slender blades sprang upward. Even the rocks were become gentle, and allowed little mosses to peep out from their sides, as a sign that they would not remain impenetrably closed forever. And the flowers sent out color and fragrance into the whole world, for they kept not their best for themselves, but would imitate the sun and the stars, which poured their warmth and radiance over the spring. And many a little gnat and beetle burst the narrow cell in which it was inclosed, and crept out slowly, and, half asleep, unfolded and shook its tender wings, and soon gained strength, and flew off to untried delights. And as the butterflies came forth from their chrysalids in all their gayety and splendor, so did every humbled and suppressed aspiration and hope free itself, and boldly launch into the open and flowing sea of spring.

German of Carove.

MEMORIES OF CHILD LIFE.

MEMORIES OF CHILD LIFE.

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN,

POET AND NOVELIST OF DENMARK.

MY life is a lovely story, happy and full of incident. If, when I was a boy, and went forth into the world poor and friendless, a good fairy had met me and said, "Choose now thy own course through life, and the object for which thou wilt strive, and then, according to the development of thy mind, and as reason requires, I will guide and defend thee to its attainment," my fate could not, even then, have been directed more happily, more prudently, or better. The history of my life will say to the world what it says to me, — There is a loving God, who directs all things for the best.

In the year 1805 there lived at Odense, in a small mean room, a young married couple, who were extremely attached to each other; he was a shoemaker, scarcely twenty-two years old, a man of a richly gifted and truly poetical mind. His wife, a few years older than himself, was ignorant of life and of the world, but possessed a heart full of love. The young man had himself made his shoemaking bench, and the bedstead with which he began housekeeping; this bedstead he had made out of the wooden frame which had borne only a short time before the coffin of the deceased Count Trampe, as he lay in state, and the remnants of the black cloth on the wood-work kept the fact still in remembrance.

Instead of a noble corpse, surrounded by crape and waxlights, here lay, on the 2d of April, 1805, a living and weeping child,

— that was myself, Hans Christian Andersen. During the first day of my existence my father is said to have sat by the bed and read aloud in Holberg, but I cried all the time. "Wilt thou go to sleep, or listen quietly?" it is reported that my father asked in joke; but I still cried on; and even in the church, when I was taken to be baptized, I cried so loudly that the preacher, who was a passionate man, said, "The young one screams like a cat!" which words my mother never forgot. A poor emigrant, Gomar, who stood as godfather, consoled her in the mean time by saying that, the louder I cried as a child, all the more beautifully should I sing when I grew older.

Our little room, which was almost filled with the shoemaker's bench, the bed, and my crib, was the abode of my childhood; the walls, however, were covered with pictures, and over the work-bench was a cupboard containing books and songs; the little kitchen was full of shining plates and metal pans, and by means of a ladder it was possible to go out on the roof, where, in the gutters between it and the neighbor's house, there stood a great chest filled with soil, my mother's sole garden, and where she grew her vegetables. In my story of the "Snow Queen" that garden still blooms.

I was the only child, and was extremely spoiled; but I continually heard from my mother how very much happier I was than she had been, and that I was brought up like a nobleman's child. She, as a child, had been driven out by her parents to beg; and once, when she was not able to do it, she had sat for a whole day under a bridge and wept.

My father gratified me in all my wishes. I possessed his whole heart; he lived for me. On Sundays he made me perspective-glasses, theatres, and pictures which could be changed; he read to me from Holberg's plays and the "Arabian Tales"; it was only in such moments as these that I can remember to have seen him really cheerful, for he never felt himself happy in his life and as a handicraftsman. His parents had been country people in good circumstances, but upon whom many misfortunes had fallen, — the cattle had died; the farm-house had been burned down; and, lastly, the husband had lost his reason. On this the wife had removed with him to Odense, and there put her son, whose mind was full of intelligence, apprentice to a shoemaker; it could not be otherwise, although it was his ardent wish to attend the grammar school, where he might learn Latin. A few well-to-do citizens had at one time spoken of this, of clubbing together to raise a sufficient sum to pay for his board and education, and thus giving him a start in life; but it never went beyond words. My poor father saw his dearest wish unfulfilled; and he never lost the remembrance of it. I recollect that once, as a child, I saw tears in his eyes, and it was when a youth from the grammar school came to our house to be measured for a new pair of boots, and showed us his books and told us what he learned.

"That was the path upon which I ought to have gone!" said my father, kissed me passionately, and was silent the whole evening.

He very seldom associated with his equals. He went out into the woods on Sundays, when he took me with him; he did not talk much when he was out, but would sit silently, sunk in deep thought, whilst I ran about and strung strawberries on a bent, or bound garlands. Only twice in the year, and that in the month of May, when the woods were arrayed in their earliest green, did my mother go with us; and then she wore a cotton gown, which she put on only on these occasions and when she partook of the Lord's Supper, and which, as long as I can remember, was her holiday gown. She always took home with her from the wood a great many fresh beech boughs, which were then planted behind the polished stone. Later in the year sprigs of St. John's wort were stuck into the chinks of the beams, and we considered their growth as omens whether our lives would be long or short. Green branches and pictures ornamented our little room, which my mother always kept neat and clean; she took great pride in always having the bed linen and the curtains very white.

One of my first recollections, although very slight in itself, had for me a good deal of importance, from the power by which the fancy of a child impressed it upon my soul; it was a family festival, and can you guess where? In that very place in Odense, in that house which I had always looked on with fear and trembling, just as boys in Paris may have looked at the Bastile, — in the Odense house of correction.

My parents were acquainted with the jailer, who invited them to a family dinner, and I was to go with them. I was at that time still so small that I was carried when we returned home.

The House of Correction was for me a great storehouse of stories about robbers and thieves; often I had stood, but always at a safe distance, and listened to the singing of the men within and of the women spinning at their wheels.

I went with my parents to the jailer's; the heavy iron-bolted gate was opened and again locked with the key from the rattling bunch; we mounted a steep staircase, — we ate and drank, and two of the prisoners waited at the table; they could not induce me to taste of anything, the sweetest things I pushed away; my mother told them I was sick, and I was laid on a bed, where I heard the spinning-wheels humming near by and merry singing, whether in my own fancy or in reality I cannot tell; but I know that I was afraid, and was kept on the stretch all the time; and yet I was in a pleasant humor, making up stories of how I had entered a castle full of robbers. Late in the night my parents went home, carrying me; the rain, for it was rough weather, dashing against my face.

Odense was in my childhood quite another town from what it is now, when it has shot ahead of Copenhagen, with its water carried through the town, and I know not what else! Then it was a hundred years behind the times; many customs and manners prevailed which long since disappeared from the capital. When the guilds removed their signs, they went in procession with flying banners and with lemons dressed in ribbons stuck on their swords. A harlequin with bells and a wooden sword ran at the head; one of them, an old fellow, Hans Struh, made a great hit by his merry chatter and his face, which was painted black, except the nose, that kept its genuine red color. My mother was so pleased with him that she tried to find out if he was in any way related to us; but I remember very well that I, with all the pride of an aristocrat, protested against any relationship with the "fool."

In my sixth year came the great comet of 1811; and my mother told me that it would destroy the earth, or that other horrible things threatened us. I listened to all these stories and fully believed them. With my mother and some of the neighboring women I stood in St. Canut's Churchyard and looked at the frightful and mighty fire-ball with its large shining tail.

All talked about the signs of evil and the day of doom. My father joined us, but he was not of the others' opinion at all, and gave them a correct and sound explanation; then my mother sighed, the women shook their heads, my father laughed and went away. I caught the idea that my father was not of our faith, and that threw me into a great fright. In the evening my mother and my old grandmother talked together, and I do not know how she explained it; but I sat in her lap, looked into her mild eyes, and expected every moment that the comet would rush down, and the day of judgment come.

The mother of my father came daily to our house, were it only for a moment, in order to see her little grandson. I was her joy and her delight. She was a quiet and most amiable old woman, with mild blue eyes and a fine figure, which life had severely tried. From having been the wife of a countryman in easy circumstances she had now fallen into great poverty, and dwelt with her feeble-minded husband in a little house, which was the last poor remains of their property. I never saw her shed a tear; but it made all the deeper impression upon me when she quietly sighed, and told me about her own mother's mother, — how she had been a rich, noble lady, in the city of Cassel, and that she had married a "comedy-player," — that was as she expressed it, — and run away from parents and home, for all of which her posterity had now to do penance. I never can recollect that I heard her mention the family name of her grandmother; but her own maiden name was Nommesen. She was employed to take care of the garden belonging to a lunatic asylum; and every Sunday evening she brought us some flowers, which they gave her permission to take home with her. These flowers adorned my mother's cupboard; but still they were mine, and to me it was allowed to put them in the glass of water. How great was this pleasure! She brought them all to me; she loved me with her whole soul. I knew it, and I understood it.

She burned, twice in the year, the green rubbish of the garden; on such occasions she took me with her to the asylum, and I lay upon the great heaps of green leaves and pea-straw; I had many flowers to play with, and — which was a circumstance upon which I set great importance — I had here better food to eat than I could expect at home.

All such patients as were harmless were permitted to go freely about the court; they often came to us in the garden, and with curiosity and terror I listened to them and followed them about; nay, I even ventured so far as to go with the attendants to those who were raving mad. A long passage led to their cells. On one occasion, when the attendants were out of the way, I lay down upon the floor, and peeped through the crack of the door into one of these cells. I saw within a lady almost naked, lying on her straw bed; her hair hung down over her shoulders, and she sang with a very beautiful voice. All at once she sprang up, and threw herself against the door where I lay; the little valve through which she received her food burst open; she stared down upon me, and stretched out her long arm toward me. I screamed for terror, — I felt the tips of her fingers touching my clothes, — I was half dead when the attendant came; and even in later years that sight and that feeling remained within my soul.

I was very much afraid of my weak-minded grandfather. Only once had he ever spoken to me, and then he had made use of the formal pronoun, "you." He employed himself in cutting out of wood strange figures, — men with beasts' heads and beasts with wings; these he packed in a basket and carried them out into the country, where he was everywhere well received by the peasant-women, because he gave to them and their children these strange toys. One day, when he was returning to Odense, I heard the boys in the street shouting after him; I hid myself behind a flight of steps in terror, for I knew that I was of his flesh and blood.

I very seldom played with other boys; even at school I took little interest in their games, but remained sitting within doors. At home I had playthings enough, which my father made for me. My greatest delight was in making clothes for dolls, or in stretching out one of my mother's aprons between the wall and two sticks before a currant-bush which I had planted in the yard, and thus to gaze in between the sun-illumined leaves. I was a singularly dreamy child, and so constantly went about with my eyes shut, as at last to give the impression of having weak sight, although the sense of sight was especially cultivated by me.

An old woman-teacher, who had an A B C school, taught me the letters, to spell, and "to read right," as it was called. She used to have her seat in a high-backed arm-chair near the clock, from which at every full stroke some little automata came out. She made use of a big rod, which she always carried with her. The school consisted mostly of girls. It was the custom of the school for all to spell loudly and in as high a key as possible. The mistress dared not beat me, as my mother had made it a condition of my going that I should not be touched. One day having got a hit of the rod, I rose immediately, took my book, and without further ceremony went home to my mother, asked that I might go to another school, and that was granted me. My mother sent me to Carsten's school for boys; there was also one girl there, a little one somewhat older than I; we became very good friends; she used to speak of the advantage it was to be to her in going into service, and that she went to school especially to learn arithmetic, for, as her mother told her, she could then become dairy-maid in some great manor.

"That you can become in my castle when I am a nobleman!" said I; and she laughed at me, and told me that I was only a poor boy. One day I had drawn something which I called my castle, and I told her that I was a changed child of high birth, and that the angels of God came down and spoke to me. I wanted to make her stare as I did with the old women in the hospital, but she would not be caught. She looked queerly at me, and said to one of the other boys standing near, "He is a fool, like his grandpapa," and I shivered at the words. I had said it to give me an air of importance in their eyes; but I failed, and only made them think that I was insane like my grandfather.

I never spoke to her again about these things, but we were no longer the same playmates as before. I was the smallest in the school, and my teacher, Mr. Carsten, always took me by the hand while the other boys played, that I might not be run over; he loved me much, gave me cakes and flowers, and tapped me on the cheeks. One of the older boys did not know his lesson, and was punished by being placed, book in hand, upon the school-table, around which we were seated; but seeing me quite inconsolable at this punishment, he pardoned the culprit.

The poor old teacher became, later in life, telegraph-director at Thorseng, where he still lived until a few years since. It is said that the old man, when showing the visitors around, told them with a pleasant smile, "Well, well, you will perhaps not believe that such a poor old man as I was the first teacher of one of our most renowned poets!"

Sometimes, during the harvest, my mother went into the field to glean. I accompanied her, and we went, like Ruth in the Bible, to glean in the rich fields of Boaz. One day we went to a place the bailiff of which was well known for being a man of a rude and savage disposition. We saw him coming with a huge whip in his hand, and my mother and all the others ran away. I had wooden shoes on my bare feet, and in my haste I lost these, and then the thorns pricked me so that I could not run, and thus I was left behind and alone. The man came up and lifted his whip to strike me, when I looked him in the face and involuntarily exclaimed, "How dare you strike me, when God can see it?"

The strong, stern man looked at me, and at once became mild; he patted me on my cheeks, asked me my name, and gave me money.

When I brought this to my mother and showed it her, she said to the others, "He is a strange child, my Hans Christian; everybody is kind to him. This bad fellow even has given him money."

MADAME MICHELET,

FRENCH AUTHOR, WIFE OF THE WELL-KNOWN WRITER, MICHELET.

AMONG my earliest recollections, dating (if my memory deceive me not) from the time when I was between the ages of four and five, is that of being seated beside a grave, industrious person, who seemed to be constantly watching me. Her beautiful but stern countenance impressed one chiefly by the peculiar expression of the light blue eyes, so rare in Southern Europe. Their gaze was like that which has looked in youth across vast plains, wide horizons, and great rivers. This lady was my mother, born in Louisiana, of English parentage.

I had constant toil before me, strangely unbroken for so young a child. At six years of age, I knit my own stockings, by and by my brothers' also, walking up and down the shady path. I did not care to go farther; I was uneasy if, when I turned, I could not see the green blind at my mother's window.

Our lowly house had an easterly aspect. At its northeast corner, my mother sat at work, with her little people around her; my father had his study at the opposite end, towards the south. I began to pick up my alphabet with him; for I had double tasks. I studied my books in the intervals of sewing or knitting. My brothers ran away to play after lessons; but I returned to my mother's work-room. I liked very well, however, to trace on my slate the great bars which are called "jambages." It seemed to me as if I drew something, from within myself, which came to the pencil's point. When my bars began to look regular, I paused often to admire what I had done; then, if my dear papa would lean towards me, and say, "Very well, little princess," I drew myself up with pride.

My father had a sweet and penetrating voice; his dark complexion showed his Southern origin, which also betrayed itself in the passionate fire of his eyes, dark, with black lashes, which softened their glance. With all their electric fire, they were not wanting in an indefinable expression of tenderness and sweetness. At sixty years of age, after a life of strange, and even tragic, incidents, his heart remained ever young and light, benevolent to all, disposed to confide in human nature, — sometimes too easily.

I had none of the enjoyments of city-bred children, and less still of that childish wit which is sure to win maternal admiration for every word which falls from the lips of the little deities. Mother Nature alone gave me a welcome, and yet my early days were not sad; all the country-side looked so lovely to me.

Just beyond the farm lay the cornfields which belonged to us; they were of no great extent, but to me they seemed infinite. When Marianne, proud of her master's possessions, would say, "Look, miss, there, there, and farther on, — all is yours," I was really frightened; for I saw the moving grain, undulating like the ocean, and stretching far away. I liked better to believe that the world ended at our meadow. Sometimes my father went across the fields to see what the reapers were doing, and then I hid my face in Marianne's apron, and cried, "Not so far, not so far! papa will be lost!"

I was then five years old. That cry was the childish expression of a sentiment, the shadow of which gained on me year by year, —

the fear that I might lose my father. I desired to please, to be praised, and to be loved. I felt so drawn towards my mother, that I sometimes jumped from my seat to give her a kiss; but when I met her look, and saw her eyes, pale and clear as a silvery lake, I recoiled, and sat down quietly. Years have passed, and yet I still regret those joys of childhood which I never knew, — a mother's caresses. My education might have been so easy; my mother might have understood my heart, — a kiss is sometimes eloquent; and in a daily embrace she would perhaps have guessed the thoughts I was too young to utter, and would have learned how faithfully I loved her.

No such freedom was allowed us. The morning kiss and familiar speech with one's parents are permitted at the North, but are less frequent in the South of France. Authority overshadows family affection. My father, who was an easy man and loved to talk, might have disregarded such regulations; but my mother kept us at a distance. It made one thoughtful and reserved to watch her going out and coming in, with her noble air, severe and silent. We felt we must be careful not to give cause for blame.

My mother could spin like a fairy. All winter she sat at her wheel; and perhaps her wandering thoughts were soothed by the gentle monotonous music of its humming. My father, seeing her so beautiful at her work, secretly ordered a light, slender spinning-wheel to be carved for her use, which she found one morning at the foot of her bed. Her cheek flushed with pleasure; she scarcely dared to touch it, it looked so fragile. "Do not be afraid," said my father; "it looks fragile, but it can well stand use. It is made of boxwood from our own garden. It grew slowly, as all things do that last. Neither your little hand nor foot can injure it." My mother took her finest Flanders flax, of silvery tresses knotted with a cherry-colored ribbon. The children made a circle round the wheel, which turned for the first time under my mother's hands. My father was watching, between smiles and tears, to see how dexterously she handled the distaff. The thread was invisible, but the bobbin grew bigger. My mother would have been contented if the days had been prolonged to four-and-twenty hours, while she was sitting by her beautiful wheel.

When we rose in the morning, we said a prayer. We knelt together; my father standing, bareheaded, in the midst. After that, what delight it was to run to the hill-top, to meet the first rays of the sun, and to hear our birds singing little songs about the welcome daylight! From the garden, the orchard, the oaks, and from the open fields, their voices were heard; and yet, in my heart, I hid more songs than all the birds in the world would have known how to sing. I was not sad by nature. I had the instincts of the lark, and longed to be as happy. Since I had no wings to carry me up to the clouds, I would have liked to hide myself like him among the tall grain and the flax.

One of my great enjoyments was to meet the strong south-winds that came to us from the ocean. I loved to struggle with the buffets of the blast. It was terrible, but sweet, to feel it tossing and twisting my curls, and flinging them backward. After these morning races on the hills, I went to visit the wild flowers, — weeds that no one else cherished; but I loved them better than all other plants. Near the water, in little pools hollowed by the rains in stormy weather, on the border of the wood, sprang up, flourished, and died, forests of dwarf proportions; white, transparent stars; bells full of sweet odors. All were mysterious and ephemeral; so much the more did I prize and regret them.

If I indeed had the merry disposition of the lark, I had also his sensitive timidity, that brings him sometimes to hide between the furrows in the earth. A look, a word, a shadow, was enough to discourage me. My smiles died away, I shrunk into myself, and did not dare to move.

"Why did my mother choose three boys, rather than three girls, after I was born?" This problem was often in my mind. Boys only tear blouses, which they don't know how to mend. If she had only thought how happy I would be with a sister, a dear little sister! How I should have loved her, — scolded her sometimes, but kissed her very often! We should have had our work and play together, thoroughly independent of all those gentlemen, — our brothers.

My eldest sister was too far from my age. There seemed to be centuries between us. I had one friend, — my cat, Zizi; but she was a wild, restless creature, and no companion, for I could scarcely hold her an instant. She preferred the roof of the house to my lap.

I became very thoughtful, and said to myself, "How shall I get a companion? and how do people make dolls?" It did not occur to me, who had never seen a toy-shop, that they could be purchased ready-made. My chin resting on my hand, I sat in meditation, wondering how I could create what I desired. My passionate desire overruled my fears, and I decided to work from my own inspiration.

I rejected wood, as too hard to afford the proper material for my dolly. Clay, so moist and cold, chilled the warmth of my invention. I took some soft, white linen, and some clean bran, and with them formed the body. I was like the savages, who desire a little god to worship. It must have a head with eyes, and with ears to listen; and it must have a breast, to hold its heart. All the rest is less important, and remains undefined.

I worked after this fashion, and rounded my doll's head by tying it firmly. There was a clearly perceptible neck, — a little stiff, perhaps; a well-developed chest; and then came vague drapery, which dispensed with limbs. There were rudiments of arms, — not very graceful, but movable; indeed, they moved of themselves. I was filled with admiration. Why might not the body move? I had read how God breathed upon Adam and Eve the breath of life; with my whole heart and my six years' strength I breathed on the creature I had made. I looked; she did not stir. Never mind. I was her mother, and she loved me; that was enough. The dangers that menaced our mutual affection only served to increase it. She gave me anxiety from the moment of her birth. How and where could I keep her in safety? Surrounded by mischievous boys, sworn enemies to their sisters' dolls, I was obliged to hide mine in a dark corner of a shed, where the wagons and carriages were kept. After being punished, I could conceive no consolation equal to taking my child to bed with me. To warm her, I tucked her into my little bed, with the friendly pussy who was keeping it warm for me. At bedtime, I laid her on my heart, still heaving with sobs; and she seemed to sigh too. If I missed her in the night, I became wide awake; I hunted for her, full of apprehension. Often she was quite at the bottom of the bed. I brought her out, folded her in my arms, and fell asleep happy.

I liked, in my extreme loneliness, to believe that she had a living soul. Her grandparents were not aware of her existence. Would she have been so thoroughly my own, if other people had known her? I loved better to hide her from all eyes.

One thing was wanting to my satisfaction. My doll had a head, but no face. I desired to look into her eyes, to see a smile on her countenance that should resemble mine. Sunday was the great holiday, when everybody did what they liked. Drawing and painting were the favorite occupations. Around the fire, in winter time, the little ones made soldiers; while my elder brother, who was a true artist, and worked with the best colors, painted dresses and costumes of various sorts. We watched his performances, dazzled by the marvels which he had at his finger-ends.

It was during this time of general preoccupation that my daughter, carefully hidden under my apron, arrived among her uncles. No one noticed me; and I tried, successfully, to possess myself of a brush, with some colors. But I could do nothing well; my hand trembled, and all my lines were crooked. Then I made an heroic resolution, — to ask my brother's assistance boldly. The temptation was strong, indeed, which led me to brave the malice of so many imps. I stepped forward, and, with a voice which I vainly endeavored to steady, I said, "Would you be so kind as to make a face for my doll?" My eldest brother seemed not at all surprised, but took the doll in his hands with great gravity, and examined it; then, with apparent care, chose a brush.

Suddenly he drew across her countenance two broad stripes of red and black, something like a cross; and gave me back my poor little doll, with a burst of laughter. The soft linen absorbed the colors, which ran together in a great blot. It was very dreadful. Great cries followed; everybody crowded round to see this wonderful work. Then a cousin of ours, who was passing Sunday with us, seized my treasure, and tossed it up to the ceiling. It fell flat on the floor. I picked it up; and, if the bad boy had not taken flight, he would have suffered, very likely, from my resentment.

Sad days were in store for us. My child and I were watched in all our interviews. Often was she dragged from her hiding-places among the bushes and in the high grass. Everybody made war upon her, — even Zizi, the cat, who shared her nightly couch. My brothers sometimes gave the doll to Zizi as a plaything; and, in my absence, even she was not sorry to claw it, and roll it about on the garden walks. When I next found it, it was a shapeless bunch of dusty rags. With the constancy of a great affection, I remade again and again the beloved being predestined to destruction; and each time I pondered how to create something more beautiful. This aiming at perfection seemed to calm my grief. I made a better form, and produced symmetrical legs (once, to my surprise, the rudiment of a foot appeared); but the better my work was, the more bitter the ridicule, and I began to be discouraged.

My doll, beyond a doubt, was in mortal peril. My brothers whispered together; and their sidelong glances foreboded me no good. I felt that I was watched. In order to elude their vigilance, I constantly transferred my treasure from one hiding-place to another; and many nights it lay under the open sky. What jeers, what laughter, had it been found!

To put an end to my torments, I threw my child into a very dark corner, and feigned to forget her. I confess to a shocking resolution; for an evil temptation assailed me. But, if self-love began to triumph over my affection for her, it was but as a momentary flash, a troubled dream. Without the dear little being, I should have had nothing to live for. It was, in fact, my second self. After much searching, my unlucky doll was discovered. Its limbs were torn off without mercy; and the body, being tossed up into an acacia-tree, was stuck on the thorns. It was impossible to bring it down. The victim hung, abandoned to the autumnal gales, to the wintry tempests, to the westerly rains, and to the northern snows. I watched her faithfully, believing that the time would come when she would revisit this earth.

In the spring, the gardener came to prune the trees. With tears in my eyes, I said, "Bring me back my doll from those branches." He found only a fragment of her poor little dress, torn and faded. The sight almost broke my heart.

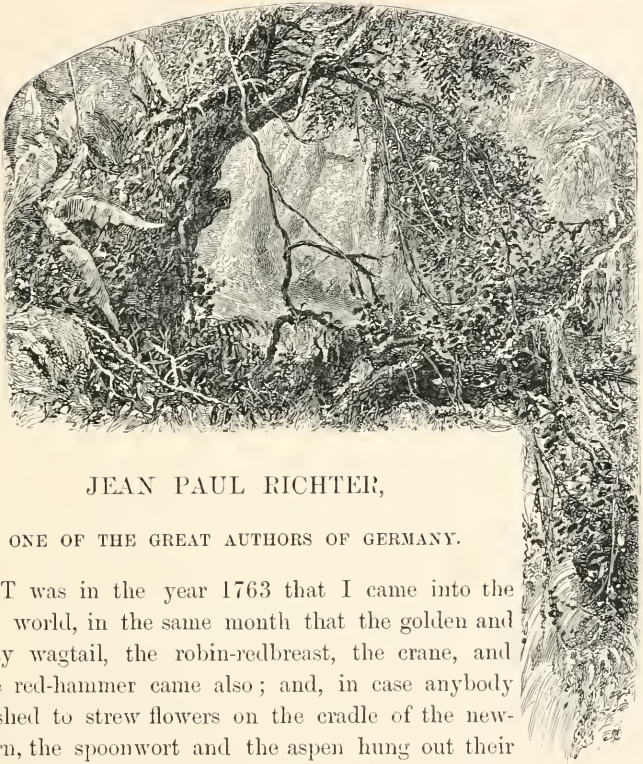
All hope being gone, I became more sensitive to the rough treatment of my brothers; and I fell into a sort of despair. After my life with *her* whom I had lost; after my emotions, my secret joys and fears, — I felt all the desolation of my bereavement. I longed for wings to fly away. When my sister excluded me from her sports with her companions, I climbed into the swing, and said to the gardener, "Jean, swing me high, — higher yet: I wish to fly away." But I was soon frightened enough to beg for mercy.

Then I tried to lose myself. Behind the grove which closed in our horizon stretched a long slope, undulating towards a deep cut below. With infinite pains, I surmounted all obstacles, and gained the road. How far, far away from home I felt! My heart was beating violently. What sorrow this would give to my dear father! Where should I sleep? I should never dare to ask shelter at a farm-house, much less lie down among the bushes, where the screech-owls made a noise all night. So, without further reflection, I returned home.

Animals are happier. I wished to be little Lauret, the gold-colored ox, who labors so patiently, and comes and goes all day long. Or I'd like to be Grisette or Brunette, the pretty asses who are mother's pets.

After all, who would not like to be a flower? However, a flower lives but a very little while: you are cut down as soon as born. A tree lasts much longer. Yet what a bore it must be to stay always in one place! To stand with one's foot buried in the ground, — it is too dreadful; the thought worried me when I was in bed, thinking things over.

I would have been a bird, if a good fairy had taken pity on me. Birds are so free, so happy, they sing all day long. If I were a bird, I would come and fly about our woods, and would perch on the roof of our house. I would come to see my empty chair, my place at table, and my mother looking sad; then, at my father's hour for reading, alone in the garden, I would fly, and perch on his shoulder, and my father would know me at once.



JEAN PAUL RICHTER,

ONE OF THE GREAT AUTHORS OF GERMANY.

IT was in the year 1763 that I came into the world, in the same month that the golden and gray wagtail, the robin-redbreast, the crane, and the red-hammer came also; and, in case anybody wished to strew flowers on the cradle of the new-born, the spoonwort and the aspen hung out their tender blossoms, — on the 20th of March, in the early morning. I was born in Wunsiedel, in the highlands of the Fitchtelbirge. Ah! I am glad to have been born in thee, little city of the mountains, whose tops look down upon us like the heads of eagles, and where we can glance over villages and mountain meadows, and drink health at all thy fountains!

To my great joy I can call up from my twelfth or, at farthest, my fourteenth month of age one pale little remembrance, like an early and frail snow-drop, from the fresh soil of my childhood. I recollect that a scholar loved me much, and carried me about in his arms, and took me to a great dark room and gave me milk to drink.

In 1765 my father was appointed minister to Joditz, where I was carried in a girl's cap and petticoat. The little Saale River, born like myself in the Fitchtelbirge, ran with me to Joditz, as it afterwards ran after me to Hof when I removed there. A small brook traverses the little town, that is crossed on a plank as I remember. The old castle and the pastor's house were the two principal buildings. There was a school-house right opposite the parsonage, into which I was admitted, when big enough to wear breeches and a green taffety cap. The schoolmaster was sickly and lean, but I loved him, and watched anxiously with him as he lay hid behind his birdcage placed in the open window to catch goldfinches, or when he spread a net in the snow and caught a yellow-hammer.

My life in Joditz was very pleasant, all the four seasons were full of happiness. I hardly know which to tell of first, for each is a heavenly introduction to the next; but I will begin with winter. In the cold morning my father came down stairs and learned his Sunday sermon by the window, and I and my brother carried the full cup of coffee to him, — and still more gladly carried it back empty, for we could pick out the unmelted sugar from the bottom. Out of doors, the sky covered all things with silence, — the brook with ice, the village roofs with snow; but in our room there was warm life, — under the stove was a pigeon-house, on the windows goldfinch-cages; on the floor was the bull-dog and a pretty little poodle close by. Farther off, at the other end of the house, was the stable, with cows and pigs and hens. The threshers we could hear in the court-yard beating out the grain.

In the long twilight our father walked back and forth, and we trotted after him, creeping under his nightgown, and holding on to his hands if we could reach them. At the sound of the vesper-bell we stood in a circle and chanted the old hymn,

"Dis finstre Nacht bricht stark herein."
"The gloomy night is gathering in."

The evening chime in our village was indeed the swan-song of the day, the muffle of the over-loud heart, calling from toil and noise to silence and dreams. Then the room was lit up, and the window-shutters bolted, and we children felt all safe behind them when the wind growled and grumbled outside, like the *Knecht Ruprecht*, or hobgoblin. Then we could undress and skip up and down in our long trailing nightgowns. My father sat at the long table studying or composing music. Our noise did not disturb the inward melody to which he listened as we sat on the table or played under it.

Once a week the old errand-woman came from Hof with fruit and meats and pastry-cakes. Sometimes the housemaid brought her distaff into the common room of an evening, and told us stories by the light of a pine-torch. At nine o'clock in the evening I was sent to the bed which I shared with my father. He sat up until eleven, and I lay wide awake, trembling for fear of ghosts, until he joined me. For I had heard my father tell of spiritual appearances, which he firmly believed he had himself seen, and my imagination filled the dark space with them.

When the spring came, and the snows melted, we who had been shut up in the parsonage court were set free to roam the fields and meadows. The sweet mornings sparkled with undried dews. I carried my father's coffee to him in his summer-house in the garden. In the evening we had currants and raspberries from the garden at our supper before dark. Then my father sat and smoked his pipe in the open air, and we played about him in our nightgowns, on the grass, as the swallows did in the air overhead.

The most beautiful of all summer birds, meanwhile, was a tender, blue butterfly, which, in this beautiful season, fluttered about me, and was my first love. This was a blue-eyed peasant-girl of my own age, with a slender form and an oval face somewhat marked with the small-pox, but with the thousand traits that, like the magic circles of the enchanter's wand, take the heart a prisoner. Augustina dwelt with her brother Romer, a delicate youth, who was known as a good accountant, and as a good singer in the choir. I played my little romance in a lively manner, from a distance, as I sat in the pastor's pew in the church, and she in the seat appropriated to women, apparently near enough to look at each other without being satisfied. And yet this was only the beginning; for when, at evening, she drove her cow home from the meadow pasture, I instantly knew the well-remembered sound of the cow-bell, and flew to the court wall to see her pass, and give her a nod as she went by; then ran again down to the gateway to speak to her, she the nun without, and I the monk within, to thrust my hand through the bars (more I durst not do, on account of the children without), in which there was some little dainty sugared almonds, or something still more costly, that I had brought for her from the city. Alas! I did not arrive in many summers three times to such happiness as this. But I was obliged to devour all the pleasures, and almost all the sorrows, within my own heart. My almonds, indeed, did not all fall upon stony ground, for there grew out of them a whole hanging-garden in my imagination, blooming and full of sweetness, and I used to walk in it for weeks together. The sound of this cow-bell remained with me for a long time, and even now the blood in my old heart stirs when this sound hovers in the air.

In the summer, I remember the frequent errands that I, with a little sack on my back, made to my grandparents in the city of Hof, to bring meat and coffee and things that could not be had in the village. The two hours' walk led through a wood where a brook babbled over the stones. At last the city with its two church-towers was seen, with the Saale shining along the level plain. I remember, on my return one summer afternoon, watching the sunny splendor of the mountain-side, traversed by flying shadows of clouds, and how a new and strange longing came over me, of mingled pain and pleasure, — a longing which knew not the name of its object, — the awakening and thirsting of my whole nature for the heavenly gifts of life.

After the first autumn threshing I used to follow the traces of the crows in the woods, and the birds going southward in long procession, with strange delight. I loved the screams of the wild geese flying over me in long flocks. In the autumn evenings the father went with me and Adam to a pototo-field lying on the other side of the Saale. One boy carried a hoe upon his shoulder, the other a hand-basket; and while the father dug as many new potatoes as were necessary for supper, and I gathered them from the ground and threw them into the basket, Adam gathered the best nuts from the hazel-bushes. It was not long before Adam fell back into the potato-beds, and I in my turn climbed the nut-tree. Then we returned home, satisfied with our nuts and potatoes, and enlivened by running for an hour in the free, invigorating air; every one may imagine the delight of returning home by the light of the harvest festivals.

Wonderfully fresh and green are two other harvest flowers, preserved in the chambers of my memory, and both are indeed trees. One was a full-branched muscatel pear-tree in the pastor's court-yard, the fall of whose splendid hanging fruit the children sought through the whole autumn to hasten; but at last, upon one of the most important days of the season, the father himself reached the forbidden fruit by means of a ladder, and brought the sweet paradise down, as well for the palates of the whole family as for the cooking-stove.

The other, always green, and yet more splendidly blooming, was a smaller tree, taken on St. Andrew's evening from the old wood, and brought into the house, where it was planted in water and soil in a large pot, so that on Christmas night it might have its leaves green when it was hung over with gifts like fruits and flowers.

In my thirteenth year my father was appointed pastor of Swarzenbach, also on the Saale River, a large market town, and I had to leave Joditz, dear even to this day to my heart. Two little sisters lie in its graveyard. My father found there his fairest Sundays, and there I first saw the Saale shining with the morning glow of my life.

CHARLES LAMB,

GENIAL ENGLISH ESSAYIST.

FROM my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-closet, the "History of the Bible," by Stackhouse, occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds — one of the ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's Temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot — attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric, driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds, — the elephant and the camel, — that stare (as well they might) out of the last two windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. The book was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom returned since in any force to trouble me.

But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse, which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously. That detestable picture!

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors, — the night-time, solitude, and the dark. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life, — so far as memory serves in things so long ago, — without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightfu spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say that, to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel, (O that old man covered with a mantle!) I owe, not my midnight terrors, the horror of my infancy, but the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sat upon my pillow, — a sure bedfellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expression) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the daylight, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed, where my witch-ridden pillow was. Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm, the hoping for a familar voice when they awake screaming, and find none to soothe them, — what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves! The keeping them up till midnight, through candlelight and the unwholesome hours, as they are called, would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution. That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams, — if dreams they were, — for the scene of them was invariably the room in which I lay.

The oldest thing I remember is Mackery End, or Mackarel End, as it is spelt, perhaps more properly, in some old maps of Hertfordshire, a farm-house, delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathampstead. I can just remember having been there, on a visit to a great-aunt, when I was a child, under the care of my sister, who, as I have said, is older than myself by some ten years. I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division. But that is impossible. The house was at that time in the occupation of a substantial yeoman, who had married my grandmother's sister. His name was Gladman. More than forty years had elapsed since the visit I speak of; and, for the greater portion of that period, we had lost sight of the other two branches also. Who or what sort of persons inherited Mackery End, — kindred or strange folk, — we were afraid almost to conjecture, but determined some day to explore.

We made an excursion to this place a few summers ago. By a somewhat circuitous route, taking the noble park at Luton in our way from Saint Alban's, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about noon. The sight of the old farm-house, though every trace of it was effaced from my recollection, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though *I* had forgotten it, *we* had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I knew the aspect of a place, which, when present, O how unlike it was to *that* which I had conjured up so many times instead of it!

Still the air breathed balmily about it; the season was in the "heart of June," and I could say with the poet, —

> But thou, that didst appear so fair
>   To fond imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of day
>   Her delicate creation!

Journeying northward lately, I could not resist going some few miles out of my road to look upon the remains of an old great house with which I had been impressed in infancy. I was apprised that the owner of it had lately pulled it down; still I had a vague notion that it could not all have perished, that so much solidity with magnificence could not have been crushed all at once into the mere dust and rubbish which I found it.

The work of ruin had proceeded with a swift hand, indeed, and the demolition of a few weeks had reduced it to — an antiquity.

I was astonished at the indistinction of everything. Where had stood the great gates? What bounded the court-yard? Whereabout did the outhouses begin? A few bricks only lay as representatives of that which was so stately and so spacious.

Had I seen these brick-and-mortar knaves at their process of destruction, I should have cried out to them to spare a plank at least out of the cheerful storeroom, in whose hot window-seat I used to sit and read Cowley, with the grass-plot before, and the hum and flappings of that one solitary wasp that ever haunted it about me, — it is in mine ears now, as oft as summer returns; or a panel of the yellow-room.

Why, every plank and panel of that house for me had magic in it! The tapestried bedrooms, — tapestry so much better than painting, — not adorning merely, but peopling, the wainscots, at which childhood ever and anon would steal a look, shifting its coverlid (replaced as quickly) to exercise its tender courage in a momentary eye-encounter with those stern bright visages, staring back in return.

Then, that haunted room in which old Mrs. Brattle died, whereinto I have crept, but always in the daytime, with a passion of fear; and a sneaking curiosity, terror-tainted, to hold communication with the past. *How shall they build it up again?*

It was an old deserted place, yet not so long deserted but that traces of the splendor of past inmates were everywhere apparent. Its furniture was still standing, even to the tarnished gilt leather battledores and crumbling feathers of shuttlecocks in the nursery, which told that children had once played there. But I was a lonely child, and had the range at will of every apartment, knew every nook and corner, wondered and worshipped everywhere.

The solitude of childhood is not so much the mother of thought, as it is the feeder of love, and silence, and admiration. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years, that though there lay — I shame to say how few roods distant from the mansion, — half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not till late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found, to my astonishment, a pretty brawling brook had been the unknown lake of my infancy. Variegated views, extensive prospects, — and those at no great distance from the house, — I was told of such, — what were they to me, being out of the boundaries of my Eden? So far from a wish to roam, I would have drawn, methought, still closer the fences of my chosen prison, and have been hemmed in by a yet securer cincture of those excluding garden walls. I could have exclaimed with that garden-loving poet, —

> "Bind me, ye woodbines, in your twines;
> Curl me about, ye gadding vines;
> And O, so close your circles lace,
> That I may never leave this place!
> But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
> Ere I your silken bondage break,
> Do you, O brambles! chain me too,
> And, courteous briers, nail me through."

I was here as in a lonely temple. Snug firesides, — the low-built roof, — parlors ten feet by ten, — frugal boards, and all the homeliness of home, — these were the condition of my birth, the wholesome soil which I was planted in. Yet, without impeachment to their tenderest lessons, I am not sorry to have had glances of something beyond; and to have taken, if but a peep, in childhood, at the contrasting accidents of a great fortune.

HUGH MILLER,

SCOTTISH GEOLOGIST AND AUTHOR.

I WAS born on the tenth day of October, 1802, in the low, long house built by my great-grandfather.

My memory awoke early. I have recollections which date several months before the completion of my third year; but, like those of the golden age of the world, they are chiefly of a mythologic character.

I retain a vivid recollection of the joy which used to light up the household on my father's arrival; and how I learned to distinguish for myself his sloop when in the offing, by the two slim stripes of white that ran along her sides and her two square topsails.

I have my golden memories, too, of splendid toys that he used to bring home with him, — among the rest, of a magnificent four-wheeled wagon of painted tin, drawn by four wooden horses and a string; and of getting it into a quiet corner, immediately on its being delivered over to me, and there breaking up every wheel and horse, and the vehicle itself, into their original bits, until not two of the pieces were left sticking together. Further, I still remember my disappointment at not finding something curious within at least the horses and the wheels; and as unquestionably the main enjoyment derivable from such things is to be had in the breaking of them, I sometimes wonder that our ingenious toymen do not fall upon the way of at once extending their trade, and adding to its philosophy, by putting some of their most brilliant things where nature puts the nut-kernel, — inside.

Then followed a dreary season, on which I still look back in memory as on a prospect which, sunshiny and sparkling for a time, has become suddenly enveloped in cloud and storm. I remember my mother's long fits of weeping, and the general gloom of the widowed household; and how, after she had sent my two little sisters to bed, and her hands were set free for the evening, she used to sit up late at night, engaged as a seamstress, in making pieces of dress for such of the neighbors as chose to employ her.

I remember I used to wander disconsolately about the harbor at this season, to examine the vessels which had come in during the night; and that I oftener than once set my mother a-crying by asking her why the shipmates who, when my father was alive, used to stroke my head, and slip halfpence into my pockets, never now took any notice of me, or gave me anything. She well knew that the shipmasters — not an ungenerous class of men — had simply failed to recognize their old comrade's child; but the question was only too suggestive, notwithstanding, of both her own loss and mine. I used, too, to climb, day after day, a grassy knoll immediately behind my mother's house, that commands a wide reach of the Moray Frith, and look wistfully out, long after every one else had ceased to hope, for the sloop with the two stripes of white and the two square topsails. But months and years passed by, and the white stripes and the square topsails I never saw.

I had been sent, previous to my father's death, to a dame's school. During my sixth year I spelled my way, under the dame, through the Shorter Catechism, the Proverbs, and the New Testament, and then entered upon her highest form, as a member of the Bible class; but all the while the process of acquiring learning had been a dark one, which I slowly mastered, with humble confidence in the awful wisdom of the schoolmistress, not knowing whither it tended, when at once my mind awoke to the meaning of the most delightful of all narratives, — the story of Joseph. Was there ever such a discovery made before? I actually found out for myself, that the art of reading is the art of finding stories in books; and from that moment reading became one of the most delightful of my amusements.

I began by getting into a corner on the dismissal of the school, and there conning over to myself the new-found story of Joseph; nor did one perusal serve; the other Scripture stories followed, — in especial, the story of Samson and the Philistines, of David and Goliah, of the prophets Elijah and Elisha; and after these came the New Testament stories and parables.

Assisted by my uncles, too, I began to collect a library in a box of birch-bark about nine inches square, which I found quite large enough to contain a great many immortal works, — "Jack the Giant-Killer," and "Jack and the Bean-Stalk," and the "Yellow Dwarf," and "Bluebeard," and "Sinbad the Sailor," and "Beauty and the Beast," and "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," with several others of resembling character.

Old Homer wrote admirably for little folks, especially in the Odyssey; a copy of which, in the only true translation extant, — for, judging from its surpassing interest and the wrath of critics, such I hold that of Pope to be, — I found in the house of a neighbor. Next came the Iliad; not, however, in a complete copy, but represented by four of the six volumes of Bernard Lintot. With what power, and at how early an age, true genius impresses! I saw, even at this immature period, that no other writer could cast a javelin with half the force of Homer. The missiles went whizzing athwart his pages; and I could see the momentary gleam of the steel ere it buried itself deep in brass and bull-hide.

I next succeeded in discovering for myself a child's book, of not less interest than even the Iliad, which might, I was told, be read on Sabbaths, in a magnificent old edition of the "Pilgrim's Progress," printed on coarse whity-brown paper, and charged with numerous woodcuts, each of which occupied an entire page, that, on principles of economy, bore letter-press on the other side. And such delightful prints as they are! It must have been some such volume that sat for its portrait to Wordsworth, and which he so exquisitely describes as

> "Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts,
> Strange and uncouth; dire faces, figures dire,
> Sharp-knee'd, sharp-elbow'd, and lean-ankled too,
> With long and ghastly shanks, — forms which, once seen,
> Could never be forgotten."

I quitted the dame's school at the end of the first twelvemonth, after mastering that grand acquirement of my life, — the art of holding converse with books; and was transferred to the grammar school of the parish, at which there attended at the time about a hundred and twenty boys, with a class of about thirty individuals more, much looked down upon by the others, and not deemed greatly worth the counting, seeing that it consisted only of *lassies.*

One morning, having the master's English rendering of the day's task well fixed in my memory, and no book of amusement to read, I began gossiping with my nearest class-fellow, a very tall boy, who ultimately shot up into a lad of six feet four, and who on most occasions sat beside me, as lowest in the form save one. I told him about the tall Wallace and his exploits; and so effectually succeeded in awakening his curiosity, that I had to communicate to him, from beginning to end, every adventure recorded by the blind minstrel.

My story-telling vocation once fairly ascertained, there was, I found, no stopping in my course. I had to tell all the stories I had ever heard or read. The demand on the part of my class-fellows was great and urgent; and, setting myself to try my ability of original production, I began to dole out to them long extempore biographies, which proved wonderfully popular and successful. My heroes were usually warriors like Wallace, and voyagers like Gulliver, and dwellers in desolate islands like Robinson Crusoe; and they had not unfrequently to seek shelter in huge deserted castles, abounding in trap-doors and secret passages, like that of Udolpho. And finally, after much destruction of giants and wild beasts, and frightful encounters with magicians and savages, they almost invariably succeeded in disentombing hidden treasures to an enormous amount, or in laying open gold mines, and then passed a luxurious old age, like that of Sinbad the Sailor, at peace with all mankind, in the midst of confectionery and fruits.

With all my carelessness, I continued to be a sort of favorite with the master; and when at the general English lesson, he used to address to me little quiet speeches, vouchsafed to no other pupil, indicative of a certain literary ground common to us, on which the others had not entered. "That, sir," he has said, after the class had just perused, in the school collection, a "Tatler" or "Spectator," — "that, sir, is a good paper; it 's an Addison"; or, "That 's one of Steele's, sir"; and on finding in my copy-book, on one occasion, a page filled with rhymes, which I had headed "Poem on Peace," he brought it to his desk, and, after reading it carefully over, called me up, and with his closed penknife, which served as a pointer, in one hand, and the copy-book brought down to the level of my eyes in the other, began his criticism. "That 's bad grammar, sir," he said, resting the knife-handle on one of the lines; "and here 's an ill-spelled word; and there 's another; and you have not at all attended to the punctuation; but the general sense of the piece is good, — very good, indeed, sir." And then he added, with a grim smile, "*Care*, sir, is, I dare say, as you remark, a very bad thing; but you may safely bestow a little more of it on your spelling and your grammar."

WALTER SCOTT,

POET, HISTORIAN, AND NOVELIST OF SCOTLAND.

IT was at Sandy Knowe, at the home of my father's father, that I had the first knowledge of life; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. I was lame, and among the old remedies for lameness some one had recommended that, as often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped and wrapped up in the warm skin as it was taken from the carcass of the animal. In this Tartar-like dress I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlor of the farm-house, while my grandfather, an old man with snowy hair, tried to make me crawl. And I remember a relation of ours, Colonel MacDougal, joining with him to excite and amuse me. I recollect his old military dress, his small cocked hat, deeply laced, embroidered scarlet waistcoat, light-colored coat, and milk-white locks, as he knelt on the ground before me, and dragged his watch along the carpet to make me follow it. This must have happened about my third year, for both the old men died soon after. My grandmother continued for some years to take charge of the farm, assisted by my uncle Thomas Scott. This was during the American war, and I remember being as anxious on my uncle's weekly visits (for we had no news at another time) to hear of the defeat of Washington, as if I had some personal cause for hating him. I got a strange prejudice in favor of the Stuart family from the songs and tales I heard about them. One or two of my own relations had been put to death after the battle of Culloden, and the husband of one of my aunts used to tell me that he was present at their execution. My grandmother used to tell me many a tale of Border chiefs, like Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie Telfer of the fair Dodhead. My kind aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose memory will always be dear to me, used to read to me with great patience until I could repeat long passages by heart. I learned the old ballad of Hardyknute, to the great annoyance of our almost only visitor, Dr. Duncan, the worthy clergyman of the parish, who had no patience to have his sober chat disturbed by my shouting forth this ditty. Methinks I see now his tall, emaciated figure, legs cased in elasped gambadoes, and his very long face, and hear him exclaim, "One might as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is!"

I was in my fourth year when my father was told that the waters of Bath might be of some advantage to my lameness. My kind aunt, though so retiring in habits as to make such a journey anything but pleasure or amusement, undertook to go with me to the wells, as readily as if she expected all the delight the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient visitors. My health was by this time a good deal better from the country air at my grandmother's. When the day was fine, I was carried out and laid beside the old shepherd among the crags and rocks, around which he fed his sheep. Childish impatience inclined me to struggle with my lameness, and I began by degrees to stand, walk, and even run.

I lived at Bath a year without much advantage to my lameness. The beauties of the Parade, with the river Avon winding around it, and the lowing of the cattle from the opposite hills, are warm in my recollection, and are only exceeded by the splendors of a toy-shop near the orange grove. I was afraid of the statues in the old abbey church, and looked with horror upon the image of Jacob's ladder with its angels.

. . . . .

My mother joined to a light and happy temper of mind a strong turn for poetry and works of imagination. She was sincerely devout, but her religion, as became her sex, was of a cast less severe than my father's. My hours of leisure from school study were spent in reading with her Pope's translation of Homer, which, with a few ballads and the songs of Allan Ramsay, was the first poetry I possessed. My acquaintance with English literature gradually extended itself. In the intervals of my school-hours I read with avidity such books of history or poetry or voyages and travels as chance presented, not forgetting fairy-tales and Eastern stories and romances. I found in my mother's dressing-room (where I slept at one time) some odd volumes of Shakespeare, nor can I forget the rapture with which I sat up in my shirt reading them by the firelight.

In my thirteenth year I first became acquainted with Bishop Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry." As I had been from infancy devoted to legendary lore of this nature, and only reluctantly withdrew my attention, from the scarcity of materials and the rudeness of those which I possessed, it may be imagined, but cannot be described, with what delight I saw pieces of the same kind which had amused my childhood, and still continued in secret the Delilahs of my imagination, considered as the subject of sober research, grave commentary, and apt illustration, by an editor who showed his poetical genius was capable of emulating the best qualities of what his pious labor preserved. I remember well the spot where I read these volumes for the first time. It was beneath a huge platanus-tree, in the ruins of what had been intended for an old-fashioned arbor in the garden adjoining the house. The summer day sped onward so fast that, notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought for with anxiety, and was found still entranced in my intellectual banquet. To read and to remember was in this instance the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my schoolfellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently or with half the enthusiasm.

To this period also I can trace distinctly the awaking of that delightful feeling for the beauties of natural objects which has never since deserted me. The neighborhood of Kelso, the most beautiful, if not the most romantic, village in Scotland, is eminently calculated to awaken these ideas. It presents objects, not only grand in themselves, but venerable from their association. The meeting of two superb rivers, the Tweed and the Teviot, both renowned in song; the ruins of an ancient abbey; the more distant vestiges of Roxburgh Castle; the modern mansion of Fleurs, which is so situated as to combine the ideas of ancient baronial grandeur with those of modern taste, — are in themselves objects of the first class; yet are so mixed, united, and melted among a thousand other beauties of a less prominent description, that they harmonize into one general picture, and please rather by unison than by concord.

FREDERIC DOUGLASS,

THE SLAVE-BOY OF MARYLAND, NOW ONE OF THE ABLEST CITIZENS AND MOST ELOQUENT ORATORS OF THE UNITED STATES.

I WAS born in what is called Tuckahoe, on the eastern shore of Maryland, a worn-out, desolate, sandy region. Decay and ruin are everywhere visible, and the thin population of the place would have quitted it long ago, but for the Choptauk River, which runs through, from which they take abundance of shad and herring, and plenty of fever and ague. My first experience of life began in the family of my grandparents. The house was built of logs, clay, and straw. A few rough fence-rails thrown loosely over the rafters answered the purpose of floors, ceilings, and bedsteads. It was a long time before I learned that this house was not my grandparents', but belonged to a mysterious personage who was spoken of as "Old Master"; nay, that my grandmother and her children and grandchildren, myself among them, all belonged to this dreadful personage, who would only suffer me to live a few years with my grandmother, and when I was big enough would carry me off to work on his plantation.

The absolute power of this distant Old Master had touched my young spirit with but the point of its cold cruel iron, yet it left me something to brood over. The thought of being separated from my grandmother, seldom or never to see her again, haunted me. I dreaded the idea of going to live with that strange Old Master whose name I never heard mentioned with affection, but always with fear. My grandmother! my grandmother! and the little hut and the joyous circle under her care, but especially *she*, who made us sorry when she left us but for an hour, and glad on her return, — how could we leave her and the good old home!

But the sorrows of childhood, like the pleasures of after-life, are transient. The first seven or eight years of the slave-boy's life are as full of content as those of the most favored white children of the slaveholder. The slave-boy escapes many troubles which vex his white brother. He is never lectured for improprieties of behavior. He is never chided for handling his little knife and fork improperly or awkwardly, for he uses none. He is never scolded for soiling the table-cloth, for he takes his meals on the clay floor. He never has the misfortune, in his games or sports, of soiling or tearing his clothes, for he has almost none to soil or tear. He is never expected to act like a nice little gentleman, for he is only a rude little slave.

Thus, freed from all restraint, the slave-boy can be, in his life and conduct, a genuine boy, doing whatever his boyish nature suggests; enacting, by turns, all the strange antics and freaks of horses, dogs, pigs, and barn-door fowls, without in any manner compromising his dignity or incurring reproach of any sort. He literally runs wild; has no pretty little verses to learn in the nursery; no nice little speeches to make for aunts, uncles, or cousins, to show how smart he is; and, if he can only manage to keep out of the way of the heavy feet and fists of the older slave-boys, he may trot on, in his joyous and roguish tricks, as happy as any little heathen under the palm-trees of Africa.

To be sure, he is occasionally reminded, when he stumbles in the way of his master, — and this he early learns to avoid, — that he is eating his *white bread*, and that he will be made to *see sights* by and by. The threat is soon forgotten, the shadow soon passes, and our sable boy continues to roll in the dust, or play in the mud, as best suits him, and in the veriest freedom. If he feels uncomfortable, from mud or from dust, the coast is clear; he can plunge into the river or the pond, without the ceremony of undressing or the fear of wetting his clothes; his little tow-linen shirt — for that is all he has on — is easily dried; and it needed washing as much as did his skin. His food is of the coarsest kind, consisting for the most part of corn-meal mush, which often finds its way from the wooden tray to his mouth in an oyster-shell. His days, when the weather is warm, are spent in the pure, open air and in the bright sunshine. He eats no candies; gets no lumps of loaf-sugar; always relishes his food; cries but little, for nobody cares for his crying; learns to esteem his bruises but slight, because others so think them.

In a word, he is, for the most part of the first eight years of his life, a spirited, joyous, uproarious, and happy boy, upon whom troubles fall only like water on a duck's back. And such a boy, so far as I can now remember, was the boy whose life in slavery I am now telling.

I gradually learned that the plantation of Old Master was on the river Wye, twelve miles from Tuckahoe. About this place and about that queer Old Master, who must be something more than man and something worse than an angel, I was eager to know all that could be known. Unhappily, all that I found out only increased my dread of being carried thither. The fact is, such was my dread of leaving the little cabin, that I wished to remain little forever; for I knew, the taller I grew, the shorter my stay. The old cabin, with its rail floor and rail bedsteads up stairs, and its clay floor down stairs, and its dirt chimney and windowless sides, and that most curious piece of workmanship of all the rest, the ladder stairway, and the hole curiously dug in front of the fireplace, beneath which grandmammy placed the sweet potatoes to keep them from the frost, was MY HOME, — the only home I ever had; and I loved it, and all connected with it. The old fences around it, and the stumps in the edge of the woods near it, and the squirrels that ran, skipped, and played upon them, were objects of interest and affection. There, too, right at the side of the hut, stood the old well, with its stately and skyward-pointing beam, so aptly placed between the limbs of what had once been a tree, and so nicely balanced, that I could move it up and down with only one hand, and could get a drink myself without calling for help. Where else in the world could such a well be found, and where could such another home be met with?

Down in a little valley, not far from grandmamma's cabin, stood a mill, where the people came often, in large numbers, to get their corn ground. It was a water-mill; and I never shall be able to tell the many things thought and felt while I sat on the bank and watched that mill, and the turning of its ponderous wheel. The mill-pond, too, had its charms; and with my pin-hook and thread line I could get *nibbles*, if I could catch no fish. But, in all my sports and plays, and in spite of them, there would, occasionally, come the painful foreboding that I was not long to remain there, and that I must soon be called away to the home of Old Master.

I was A SLAVE, — born a slave; and though the fact was strange to me, it conveyed to my mind a sense of my entire dependence on the will of *somebody* I had never seen; and, from some cause or other, I had been made to fear this Somebody above all else on earth. Born for another's benefit, as the *firstling* of the cabin flock I was soon to be selected as a meet offering to the fearful and inexorable Old Master, whose huge image on so many occasions haunted my childhood's imagination. When the time of my departure was decided upon, my grandmother, knowing my fears, and in pity for them, kindly kept me ignorant of the dreaded event about to happen. Up to the morning (a beautiful summer morning) when we were to start, and, indeed, during the whole journey, — a journey which, child as I was, I remember as well as if it were yesterday, — she kept the sad fact hidden from me. This reserve was necessary, for, could I have known all, I should have given grandmother some trouble in getting me started. As it was, I was helpless, and she — dear woman! — led me along by the hand, resisting, with the reserve and solemnity of a priestess, all my inquiring looks to the last.

The distance from Tuckahoe to Wye River, where Old Master lived, was full twelve miles, and the walk was quite a severe test of the endurance of my young legs. The journey would have proved too hard for me, but that my dear old grandmother — blessings on her memory! — afforded occasional relief by "toting" me on her shoulder. My grandmother, though old in years, — as was evident from more than one gray hair, which peeped from between the ample and graceful folds of her newly-ironed bandanna turban, — was marvellously straight in figure, elastic, and muscular. I seemed hardly to be a burden to her. She would have "toted" me farther, but that I felt myself too much of a man to allow it, and insisted on walking. Releasing dear grandmamma from carrying me did not make me altogether independent of her, when we happened to pass through portions of the sombre woods which lay between Tuckahoe and Wye River. She often found me increasing the energy of my grip, and holding her clothing, lest something should come out of the woods and eat me up. Several old logs and stumps imposed upon me, and got themselves taken for wild beasts. I could see their legs, eyes, and ears till I got close enough to them to know that the eyes were knots, washed white with rain, and the legs were broken boughs, and the ears only fungous growths on the bark.

As the day went on the heat grew; and it was not until the afternoon that we reached the much-dreaded end of the journey. I found myself in the midst of a group of children of many colors, — black, brown, copper-colored, and nearly white. I had not seen so many children before. Great houses loomed up in different directions, and a great many men and women were at work in the fields. All this hurry, noise, and singing was very different from the stillness of Tuckahoe. As a new-comer, I was an object of special interest; and, after laughing and yelling around me, and playing all sorts of wild tricks, the children asked me to go out and play with them. This I refused to do, preferring to stay with grandmamma. I could not help feeling that our being there boded no good to me. Grandmamma looked sad. She was soon to lose another object of affection, as she had lost many before. I knew she was unhappy, and the shadow fell on me, though I knew not the cause.

All suspense, however, must have an end, and the end of mine was at hand. Affectionately patting me on the head, and telling me to be a good boy, grandmamma bade me to go and play with the little children. "They are kin to you," said she; "go and play with them." Among a number of cousins were Phil, Tom, Steve, and Jerry, Nance and Betty.

Grandmother pointed out my brother and sisters who stood in the group. I had never seen brother nor sisters before; and though I had sometimes heard of them, and felt a curious interest in them, I really did not understand what they were to me, or I to them. We were brothers and sisters, but what of that? Why should they be attached to me, or I to them? Brothers and sisters we were by blood, but *slavery* had made us strangers. I heard the words "brother" and "sisters," and knew they must mean something; but slavery had robbed these terms of their true meaning. The experience through which I was passing, they had passed through before. They had already learned the mysteries of Old Master's home, and they seemed to look upon me with a certain degree of compassion; but my heart clave to my grandmother. Think it not strange that so little sympathy of feeling existed between us. The conditions of brotherly and sisterly feeling were wanting; we had never nestled and played together. My poor mother, like many other slave-women, had many children, but NO FAMILY! The domestic hearth, with its holy lessons and precious endearments, is abolished in the case of a slave-mother and her children. "Little children, love one another," are words seldom heard in a slave-cabin.

I really wanted to play with my brother and sisters, but they were strangers to me, and I was full of fear that grandmother might leave without taking me with her. Entreated to do so, however, and that, too, by my dear grandmother, I went to the back part of the house, to play with them and the other children. *Play*, however, I did not, but stood with my back against the wall, witnessing the mirth of the others. At last, while standing there, one of the children, who had been in the kitchen, ran up to me, in a sort of roguish glee, exclaiming, "Fed, Fed! grandmammy gone! grandmammy gone!" I could not believe it:

yet, fearing the worst, I ran into the kitchen, to see for myself, and found it even so. Grandmamma had indeed gone, and was now far away, clean out of sight. I need not tell all that happened now. Almost heartbroken at the discovery, I fell upon the ground, and wept a boy's bitter tears, refusing to be comforted.

CHARLES DICKENS,

FIRST NOVELIST OF THE PERIOD.

I HAVE been looking on, this evening, at a merry company of children assembled round that pretty German toy, a Christmas tree.

Being now at home again, and alone, the only person in the house awake, my thoughts are drawn back, by a fascination which

New York Public Library
MELROSE BRANCH
910 MORRIS AVENUE
CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

I do not care to resist, to my own childhood. Straight in the middle of the room, cramped in the freedom of its growth by no encircling walls or soon-reached ceiling, a shadowy tree arises; and, looking up into the dreamy brightness of its top, — for I observe in this tree the singular property that it appears to grow downward towards the earth, — I look into my youngest Christmas recollections.

All toys at first, I find. But upon the branches of the tree, lower down, how thick the books begin to hang! Thin books, in themselves, at first, but many of them, with deliciously smooth covers of bright red or green. What fat black letters to begin with!

"A was an archer, and shot at a frog." Of course he was. He was an apple-pie also, and there he is! He was a good many things in his time, was A, and so were most of his friends, except X, who had so little versatility that I never knew him to get beyond Xerxes or Xantippe: like Y, who was always confined to a yacht or a yew-tree; and Z, condemned forever to be a zebra or a zany.

But now the very tree itself changes, and becomes a bean-stalk, — the marvellous bean-stalk by which Jack climbed up to the giant's house. Jack, — how noble, with his sword of sharpness and his shoes of swiftness!

Good for Christmas-time is the ruddy color of the cloak in which, the tree making a forest of itself for her to trip through with her basket, Little Red-Riding-Hood comes to me one Christmas eve, to give me information of the cruelty and treachery of that dissembling wolf who ate her grandmother, without making any impression on his appetite, and then ate her, after making that ferocious joke about his teeth. She was my first love. I felt that if I could have married Little Red-Riding Hood, I should have known perfect bliss. But it was not to be, and there was nothing for it but to look out the wolf in the Noah's Ark there, and put him late in the procession on the table, as a monster who was to be degraded.

O the wonderful Noah's Ark! It was not found seaworthy when put in a washing-tub, and the animals were crammed in at the roof, and needed to have their legs well shaken down before they could be got in even there; and then ten to one but they began to tumble out at the door, which was but imperfectly fastened with a wire latch ; but what was that against it ?

Consider the noble fly, a size or two smaller than the elephant ; the lady-bird, the butterfly, — all triumphs of art ! Consider the goose, whose feet were so small, and whose balance was so indifferent that he usually tumbled forward and knocked down all the animal creation ! consider Noah and his family, like idiotic tobacco-stoppers ; and how the leopard stuck to warm little fingers; and how the tails of the larger animals used gradually to resolve themselves into frayed bits of string.

Hush ! Again a forest, and somebody up in a tree, — not Robin Hood, not Valentine, not the Yellow Dwarf, — I have passed him and all Mother Bunch's wonders without mention, — but an Eastern king with a glittering scymitar and turban. It is the setting-in of the bright Arabian Nights.

O, now all common things become uncommon and enchanted to me ! All lamps are wonderful ! all rings are talismans ! Common flower-pots are full of treasure, with a little earth scattered on the top ; trees are for Ali Baba to hide in ; beefsteaks are to throw down into the Valley of Diamonds, that the precious stones may stick to them, and be carried by the eagles to their nests, whence the traders, with loud cries, will scare them. All the dates imported come from the same tree as that unlucky one, with whose shell the merchant knocked out the eye of the genii's invisible son. All olives are of the same stock of that fresh fruit concerning which the Commander of the Faithful overheard the boy conduct the fictitious trial of the fraudulent olive-merchant. Yes, on every object that I recognize among those upper branches of my Christmas tree I see this fairy light !

But hark ! the Waits are playing, and they break my childish sleep ! What images do I associate with the Christmas music as I see them set forth on the Christmas tree ! Known before all the others, keeping far apart from all the others, they gather round my little bed. An angel, speaking to a group of shepherds in a field; some travellers, with eyes uplifted, following a star ; a baby in a manger; a child in a spacious temple, talking with grave men; a solemn figure with a mild and beautiful face, raising a dead girl by the hand; again, near a city gate, calling back the son of a widow, on his bier, to life; a crowd of people looking through the opened roof of a chamber where he sits, and letting down a sick person on a bed, with ropes; the same, in a tempest, walking on the waters in a ship; again, on a sea-shore, teaching a great multitude; again, with a child upon his knee, and other children around; again, restoring sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, health to the sick, strength to the lame, knowledge to the ignorant; again, dying upon a cross, watched by armed soldiers, a darkness coming on, the earth beginning to shake, and only one voice heard, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

Encircled by the social thoughts of Christmas time, still let the benignant figure of my childhood stand unchanged! In every cheerful image and suggestion that the season brings, may the bright star that rested above the poor roof be the star of all the Christian world!

A moment's pause, O vanishing tree, of which the lower boughs are dark to me yet, and let me look once more. I know there are blank spaces on thy branches, where eyes that I have loved have shone and smiled, from which they are departed. But, far above, I see the Raiser of the dead girl and the widow's son, — and God is good!

THE END.

New York Public Library
MELROSE BRANCH
Circulation Department